MEGA

ROAD BLASTER FX
Mega CD animated drive-'em-up hilarity!

100% PURE SEGA MEGA DRIVE... February 1993 Issue 5 £1.95

TOP GUN!

***Afterburner 3* – Sega's Mega CD unleashes its top-secret weapon...**

WIN! STREET FIGHTER II

25 carts to be won!

Drive like a maniac!

***Micro Machines* burns rubber. Can *you* handle the Mega Drive's best ever race-'em-up?**

DISASTER!
Read five *true-life* stories of video game addiction: page 18

350 MEGA DRIVE TIPS!

ALL YOUR GAMES TIPPED IN OUR 15-PAGE TIPS SPECIAL (NO REALLY, IT'S ENORMOUS)

DOES PAT SHARP RECKON *SONIC* WILL KILL ROCK 'N' ROLL?

Record industry bosses are *seriously* worried...

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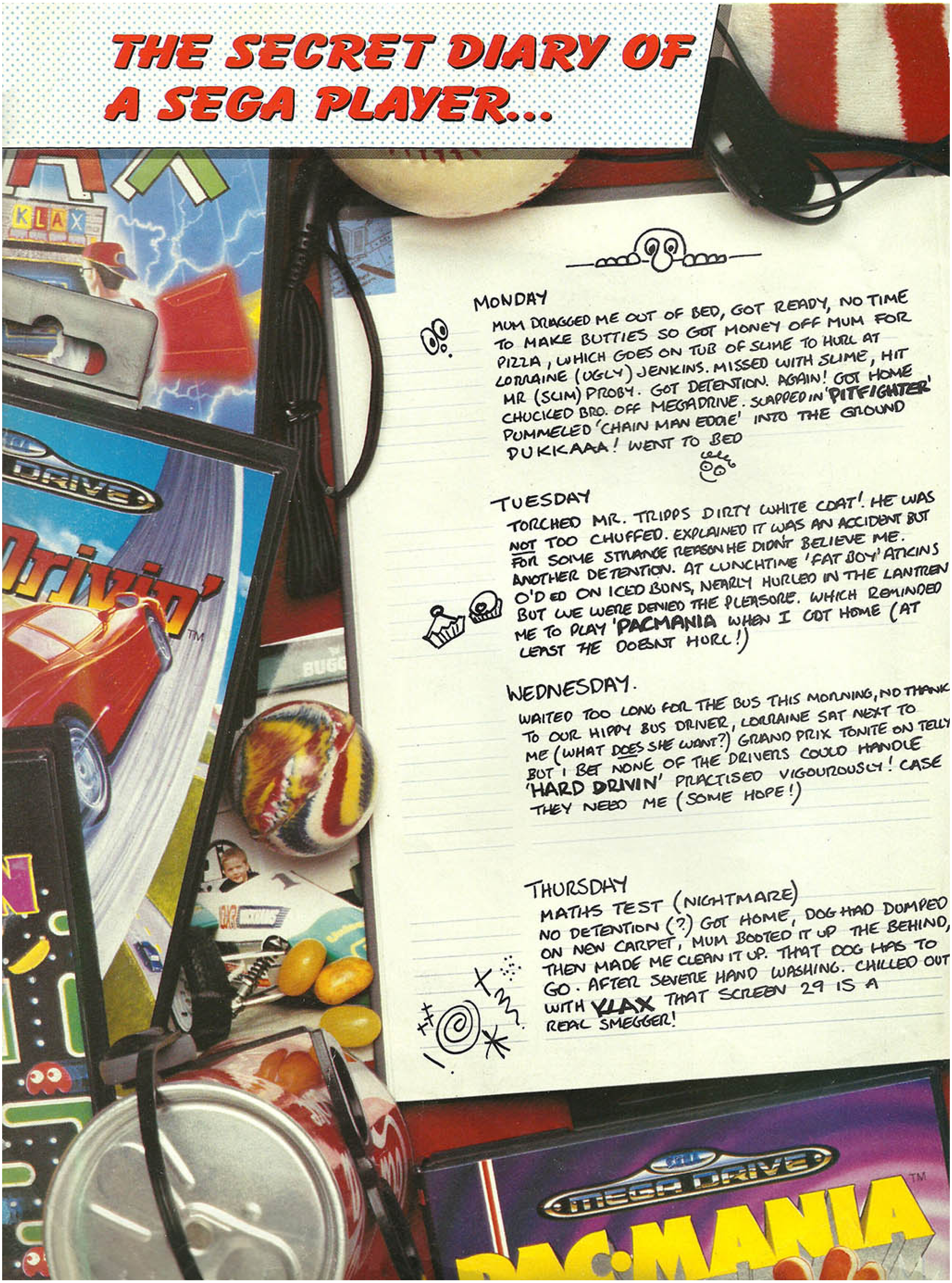
EGA IS NOT AN OFFICIAL SEGA PUBLICATION

THE SECRET DIARY OF A SEGA PLAYER...



MONDAY

MUM DRAGGED ME OUT OF BED, GOT READY, NO TIME
TO MAKE BUTTIES SO GOT MONEY OFF MUM FOR
PIZZA, WHICH GOES ON TUB OF SLIME TO HURL AT
LORRAINE (UGLY) JENKINS. MISSED WITH SLIME, HIT
MR (SLIM) PROBY. GOT DETENTION. AGAIN! GOT HOME
CHUCKED BRO. OFF MEGADRIVE. SLAPPED IN '**PITFIGHTER**'
PUMMELED 'CHAIN MAN EDDIE' INTO THE GROUND
DUKKAAA! WENT TO BED

TUESDAY

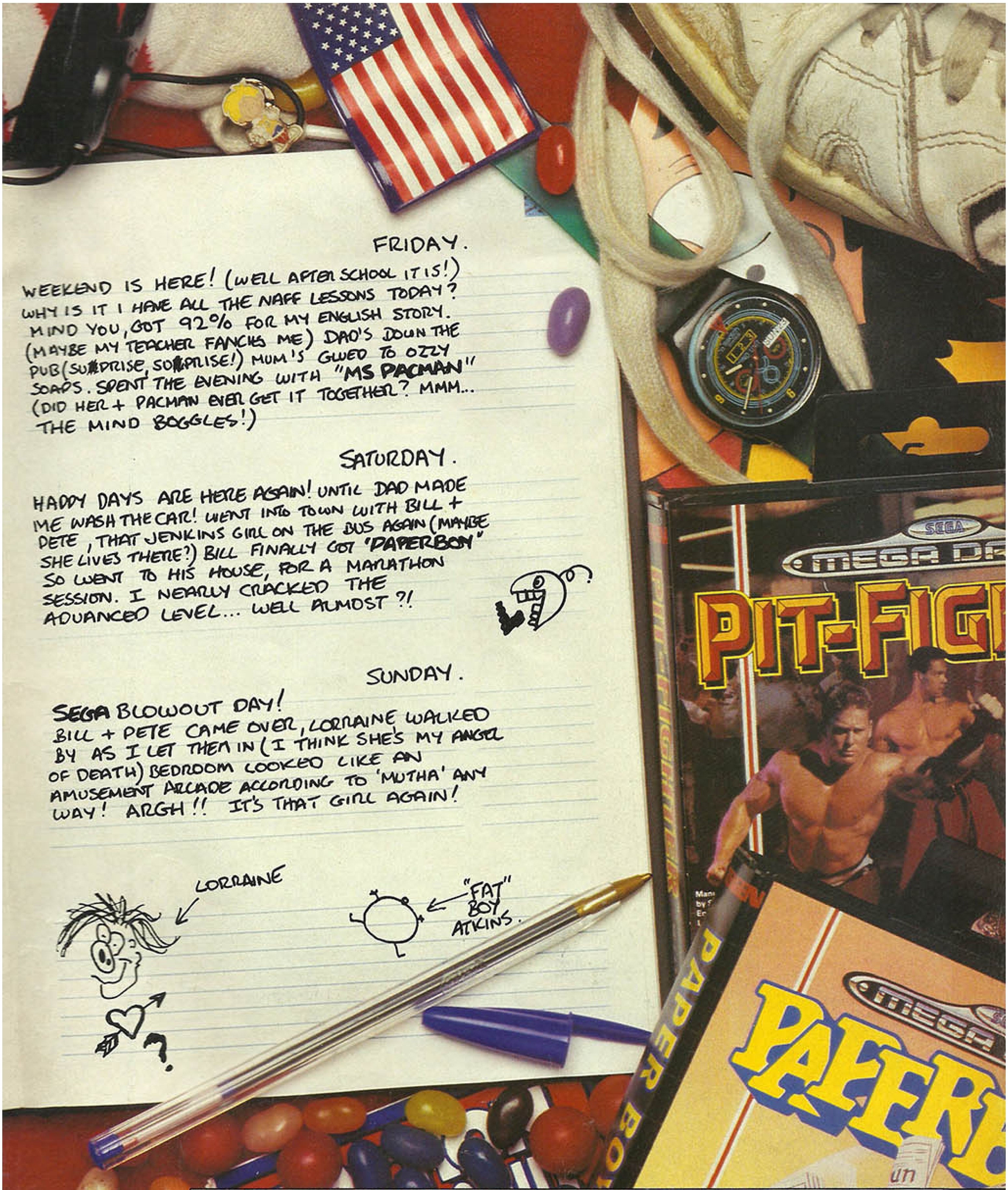
TORCHED MR. TRIPPS DIRTY WHITE COAT! HE WAS
NOT TOO CHUFFED. EXPLAINED IT WAS AN ACCIDENT BUT
FOR SOME STRANGE REASON HE DIDN'T BELIEVE ME.
ANOTHER DETENTION. AT LUNCHTIME 'FAT BOY' ATKINS
O'D ED ON ICED BUNS, NEARLY HURLED IN THE LANTERN
BUT WE WERE DENIED THE PLEASURE. WHICH REMINDED
ME TO PLAY '**PACMANIA** WHEN I GOT HOME (AT
LEAST HE DOESNT HURL!)

WEDNESDAY.

WAITED TOO LONG FOR THE BUS THIS MORNING, NO THANK
TO OUR HIPPY BUS DRIVER, LORRAINE SAT NEXT TO
ME (WHAT DOES SHE WANT?) GRAND PRIX TONITE ON TELLY
BUT I BET NONE OF THE DRIVERS COULD HANDLE
'**HARD DRIVIN**' PRACTISED VIGOUROUSLY! CASE
THEY NEED ME (SOME HOPE!)

THURSDAY

MATHS TEST (NIGHTMARE)
NO DETENTION (?) GOT HOME, DOG HAD DUMPED
ON NEW CARPET, MUM BOOTED IT UP THE BEHIND,
THEN MADE ME CLEAN IT UP. THAT DOG HAS TO
GO. AFTER SEVERE HAND WASHING. CHILLED OUT
WITH **KLAX** THAT SCREEN 29 IS A
REAL SMEGGER!



FRIDAY.

WEEKEND IS HERE! (WELL AFTER SCHOOL IT IS!) WHY IS IT I HAVE ALL THE NAFF LESSONS TODAY? MIND YOU, GOT 92% FOR MY ENGLISH STORY. (MAYBE MY TEACHER FANCIES ME) DAD'S DOWN THE PUB (SU~~R~~PRISE, SU~~R~~PRISE!) MUM'S GLUED TO OZZY SOAPS. SPENT THE EVENING WITH **"MS PACMAN"** (DID HER + PACMAN EVER GET IT TOGETHER? MMM... THE MIND BOGGLES!)

SATURDAY.

HAPPY DAYS ARE HERE AGAIN! UNTIL DAD MADE ME WASH THE CAR! WENT INTO TOWN WITH BILL + PETE, THAT JENKINS GIRL ON THE BUS AGAIN (MAYBE SHE LIVES THERE?) BILL FINALLY GOT **"PAPERBOY"** SO WENT TO HIS HOUSE, FOR A MARATHON SESSION. I NEARLY CRACKED THE ADVANCED LEVEL... WELL ALMOST ?!

SUNDAY.

SEGA BLOWOUT DAY!
BILL + PETE CAME OVER, LORRAINE WALKED BY AS I LET THEM IN (I THINK SHE'S MY ANGEL OF DEATH) BEDROOM LOOKED LIKE AN AMUSEMENT ARCADE ACCORDING TO 'MUTHA' ANY WAY! ARGH!! IT'S THAT GIRL AGAIN!

TENGEN
VIDEO GAMES

SEGA™

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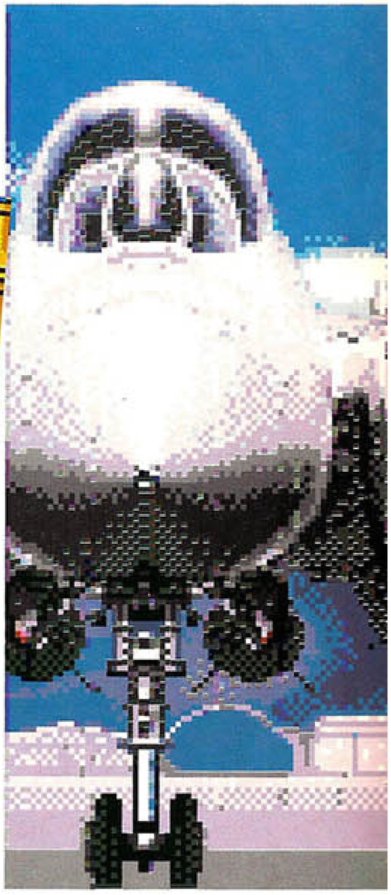
Win Streetfighter 2 • Come karting •

Issue five can barely walk, it's so packed. So read on, feast upon a banquet of fine Sega fare, then vom'



6 MEGA CITY

Now that the crush for Christmas consoles is but a distant memory, we take a look back at the yuletide nightmare and find out who came out on top, Sega or Nintendo. Plus all the usual latest news, gossip, trivia and general snippetty bits from around the globe. Oh, and we also have the regulars like Bull Durham, Qs In The News and Voyage To The Bowels Of The Back Catalogue.

Christmas is over, but who won the shop-floor battle?

12 CHARTS

MEGA's got a really tricky question to ask you. Which chart position do you think *Sonic 2* came straight in at? Here's a clue. It's a very high position and it rhymes with bun. And if you're interested in how well all the other Mega Drive games are doing at the moment, this is the page you want.

13 GO KARTING WITH THE MEGA TEAM

Enter this fabulous compo and you could end up racing go-karts against the team. And at the end of it all, the winner will walk away with heaps of *Micro Machines* goodies, courtesy of Codemasters.

14 DOES PAT SHARP RECKON *SONIC* WILL KILL ROCK 'N' ROLL?

We ask the guy with the haircut from hell to tell us what he thinks about the decline in music sales while video games are still on the up. Are consoles really killing music? See page 14.

SUPERSONIC
H.W.A.
FEATURING
SONIC
THE HEDGEHOG

Is Sonic *making* music, or *killing* it?

16 *STREETFIGHTER 2*: WIN THE MEGA DRIVE VERSION OF THE BEAT-'EM-UP

If and when the game appears on our beloved Segas, you can be one of the first to get hold of a copy. Win our compo, and you'll get the hottest game of '93 (we hope!)

You could win a copy of *Streetfighter 2* on the Mega Drive!

Do video games mess you up? Naah!

18 DO VIDEO GAMES SCREW YOU UP? (REVISITED)

MEGA decides to lay this long-running argument to rest once and for all. We take a look at five case studies of people who claim that video games have ruined various aspects of their lives, then we ask the experts what they think. Turn to page 18 to find out if your Sega will ultimately do your head in.

22 PREVIEWS

There's a mammoth eight pages of new stuff this month folks. If you want to see how *Super Kick-Off's* coming along, or want to know more about Sega's bizarre dolphin sim, *Ecco*, this is the place to look. Oh, and there's loads more crammed in here besides.

REVIEWED THIS MONTH

Micro Machines 32
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Taz-Mania 79
Grand Slam Tennis 81

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Eight pages of previews • Mega reviews

READY FOR TAKE OFF!

***Afterburner 3* has arrived. But is it going to show us what the Mega CD can *really* do? Climb inside your Tomcat and burn over to page 36**

60 TIPS

This month the tips section has got a new look to it. MEGA PLAY now incorporates MEGA MEDIC and these four pages are followed by the bloody enormous tips directory. So now you don't have to search fruitlessly through dozens of back issues for that tip you know you've seen somewhere before.

68 ARENA

Just when you thought it was safe to chuck your old carts in the bin, good ol' MEGA Mellerick trumps up another serving of ways to prolong their lifespan.

69 RIP 'N' TIP

If you want to out-madden *Madden '93*, stride all over *Strider* or simply um, have a bash at *Hellfire*, our Rip 'n' Tip section should do the trick. What's more, it means you can completely ruin your issue of MEGA by tearing it to bits. Useful huh?

76 TOP 100

Here it is again – the section of the mag that manages to fly in the face of almost everyone's opinions. You can shout all you like, but these are our favourite games and you can either like it or lump it. You *might* even find it useful.

84 SUBSCRIBE

If you order a year's supply of luvverly-jubberly MEGAs right here and now, you'll get an extra two issues free. That's right, 14 issues for the price of 12. Oh and while you're here (page 84 that is), you can also order any back issues that you might have missed.

90 PURCHASE

Why wander around the shops for console-related widgets and add-ons when you can order some stonking hardware directly from MEGA? Why indeed? All you have to do is fill in the form on page 90 – it's as simple as that.

92 MEGA MOUTH

Neil West casts his eye over your scribblings, draws upon his entire knowledge of the Mega Drive scene, then gets horribly confused and rings up Dominik Diamond for some advice. (Dyer, get off the contents page, won't you – Neil)

96 CREATING A BAD INFLUENCE

Journalist, groovy dancer, and all-round fame-seeker Neil West pops into the Bad Influence! studio to see how the show is made. Two pages of Andy Crane and Violet Berlin – what more could you ask for? (Huge wads of cash and eternal happiness perhaps – Neil)

Bag some booty at bargain prices!

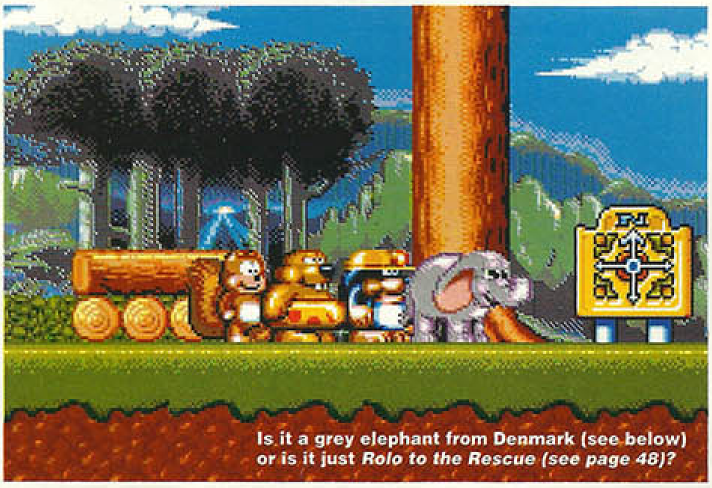
98 SHUTDOWN

Wanna know what we'll be bringing you next month? You'd better wait and see then, because this page is merely full of vague speculation based on feeble hopes for what might, just might, turn up in the post.

The making of Bad Influence!. Neil pops up north to hob-knob with the stars. Lucky thing!

MEGA

MEGA FIVE'S ALIVE!


Is it a grey elephant from Denmark (see below) or is it just *Rolo to the Rescue (see page 48)?*

Welcome to issue five of MEGA! If you've never picked up an issue of the magazine before, then please indulge us for just these first few paragraphs. Then feel free to enjoy the rest of the magazine at your leisure...

Thing is, Neil learnt this fantastic (well, he thinks it's quite amusing) trick over Christmas and so he wants to try his mind-reading powers on you lot. We're not normally this bizarre – we usually stick to talking about Mega Drives, honest. But if we hadn't let Neil have his say, well, our lives wouldn't be worth living. So, erm, over to (ahem) "The Great Westo's Incredibly Strange - But True - World Of The Mind". Cue git-features...

"Thank you very much ladies and gentlemen. I want you to follow these steps very carefully... (The loon's serious, better do as he says – Andy)

1. Think of a number between one and nine.
2. Multiply that number by nine.
3. You should have a number between 1 and 100. Now add the two digits of your number together.
4. Subtract five from your new number.
5. If A is one, B is two (and so on). Work out which letter your number corresponds to.
6. Think of a country the name of which starts with your letter. Remember it.
7. Take the second letter of the name of your country, and think of an animal that begins with this letter. Remember it.
8. Think of the colour of your animal. Remember it.

Thank you very much. My assistant will now continue..."

Now if you've followed the pattern correctly and your maths is up to scratch, erm, "The Great Westo's" prediction (I've got it written in a sealed envelope, just opening it now...) is that you're thinking of... a grey elephant from Denmark!

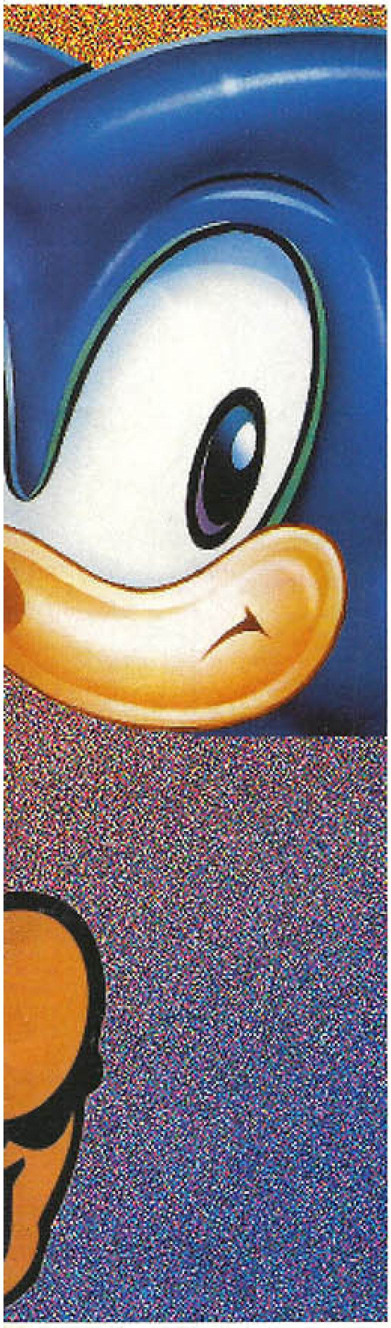
You should now be either gob-smackingly impressed or wondering what the hell's going on, depending on whether the trick worked or not – let us know. Now, enjoy the rest of the mag (it's a lot better than this bit – promise).

® Neil, Andy, Paul and Amanda

SONIC ON CD

For months and months now there has been talk about the CD version of the first *Sonic the Hedgehog*. Rumours have led us to believe that the game would be virtually the same as the cart version, but, of course, with improved sound.

Well, as you can see from these screenshots, the game is currently looking completely different to the Mega Drive version. It's still early days, however, so the end result could turn out to be different again. What we do know for sure is that the game will be called *CD Sonic* (in Japan) and it is due out in March of this year, which just happens to be the official release date of the UK Mega CD – say no more.



SEGA VS NINTENDO

So who won the big Christmas fight? The war was fought on several battlegrounds: in the shops, through TV advertising, on big-name game releases, on hype. But who really made it big this Christmas, Sega or Nintendo? At the moment MEGA can but speculate...

Now we're biased – we don't mind admitting it. But let's try to step back from our big lurve for Sega and take a look at the situation fairly and squarely. Actually, first of all it might be an idea to work out why it's important. I mean, really – we're all adult about this and you won't find MEGA slagging off Nintendo for the sake of it. So why should it matter who made the biggest impact?

It matters because independent game developers want their games out on the most popular systems. And more game developers looking for a Sega licence means more choice, which invariably leads to higher quality games. For example, if Sega hadn't been selling so well, then Codemasters wouldn't have bothered risking lawyer-induced death by releasing *Micro Machines*.

Now, it just so happens that both Nintendo and Sega are doing so well that practically all games' developers would want a slice of the action no matter which of the two giants was inching ahead.

But in the world of video games, you really have to be in one camp or the other – very few developers have managed to make it big-time with both Sega and Nintendo. Virgin release no titles for Nintendo, whereas Ocean (probably the UK's biggest software house) has a Nintendo-only deal. You get the picture?

So one of the major factors determining which way a games' developer should jump is which of the two console giants is leading the way. And so (after a lot of wibble, but hey – we're just following the time-honoured tradition of making you wait for it) let's take a look at the score cards...

Both camps will tell you that they're winning the race

Of course, both Sega and Nintendo will tell you that they're "winning the race", but we think the facts speak for themselves: Sega are confidently leading the 16-bit console race in the UK. Their advertising has been "brand" orientated (as opposed to selling specific games or consoles), which bodes well for long-term sales. And with news of the Mega CD's launch just around the corner, the scene is set for Sega to race yet further ahead in 1993.

And for our gallant runner-up? Sorry Mario, looks like you're yesterday's man...

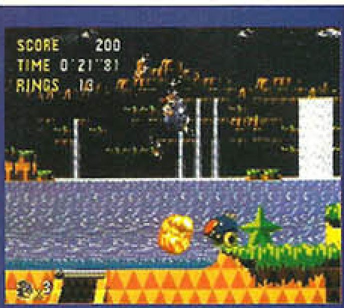
IN 1992:

Sega sold:	Over one million Mega Drives
Nintendo sold:	750,000 Super Nintendos
Sega spent on advertising:	£12 million
Nintendo spent on advertising:	£15 million
Total number of Sega mags:	Ten
Total number of Nintendo mags:	Nine

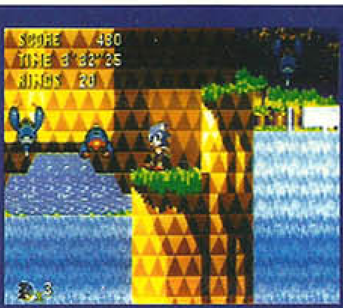
The above figures are estimated, as official figures were not available at the time of going to press.

SECONDS AWAY... ROUND '93!

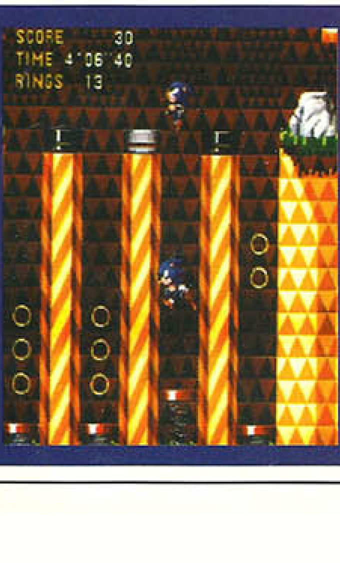
At the time of going to press, all the biggest Sega games and hardware releases for the coming year were being unveiled in Las Vegas at the 1993 Consumer Electronics Show. Neil West was there and he'll be bringing back a full report for the next issue of MEGA. Don't miss it. Ⓜ

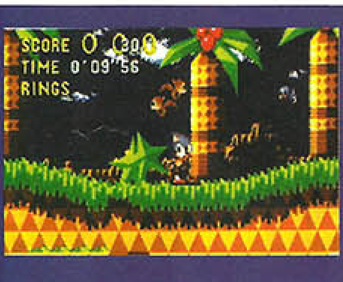


It looks like all the TVs from the first game are still here, because you can clearly see that Sonic is flashing as if he were invulnerable. Check out the polished graphics as well. This could be the best *Sonic* yet!



From looking at the screenshots you can see that most things look similar to the cart versions, but changes *have* been made. Take a look at those baddies jumping out of the water for a taster of what's new





Above: Don't ask me what zone this is, 'cos I don't know. It looks very nice though, doesn't it?

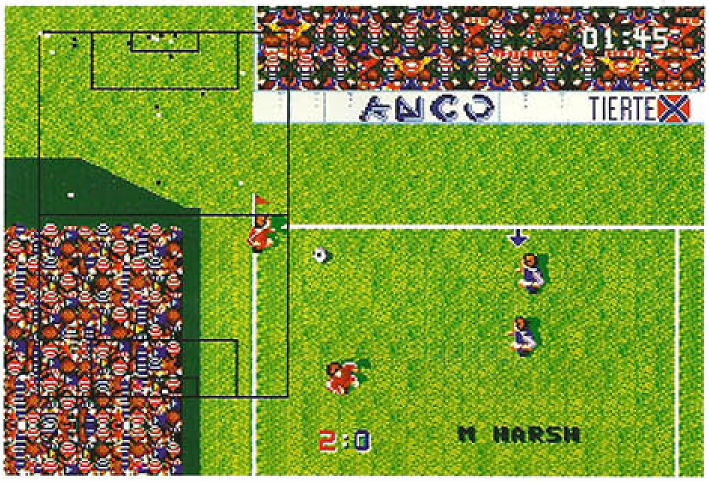
Left: Don't be confused by the two Sonics you see here. This is a small tag showing quite a bit of a level. Those springs look nice, don't they?

MEGA CITY

SING-A-LONG-A-SEGA!

Now you can have karaoke on your Mega CD. What a bloody nightmare

Terrorise your neighbours, confuse your dog and interfere with elderly relatives' hearing aids with the latest Sega Mega CD add-on. Yep, karaoke is the name of the game/torture, and this new widget is all Mega CD owners need to set up their own system at home. What laughs they must have, at Sega Japan HQ, as they think of the pain and misery they're inflicting on music-lovers around the globe. Gits.

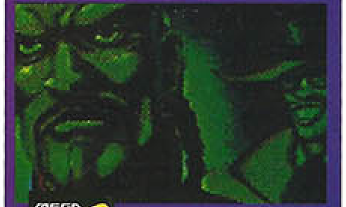


GOAL! The ultimate soccer game?

Kick-Off (and all its thousands of incarnations) is renowned as one of the best football games ever written. The good news is that Dino Dini, the man behind the games, has been hired by Virgin Games to create "the pinnacle of Dino's work": the ultimate Mega Drive footy game.

So with *Super Kick-Off* from US Gold almost ready (see our preview on page 22), Sensible Software beavering away on a conversion of their fabulous *Sensible Soccer* for the Mega Drive (due for release next Christmas), and now *GOAL!* scheduled for release sometime in 1994, it seems that we're finally getting the soccer games we deserve.

MEGA CD UPDATE

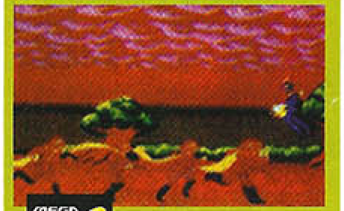


RISE OF THE DRAGON

(Virgin)

Fully animated graphic sequences provide the basis for another RPG on the Mega CD. You play the part of William "Blade" Hunter, who is on the trail of the villains who sold the mayor's daughter to a drug gang (how do you sell someone? And what did they want with her, eh?). Anyway, using all your detective powers the scene is set for a justice-crazed romp through a city's underworld. Just don't forget to tell your mother where you are.

MEGA CD UPDATE



SAIBOGU 009

(Virgin)

Super Agent 009 is attempting to deliver Baby Agent 001 (look, we didn't design this game, OK?) to Agent 003. So grab your jet pack and your fire arm and set to work. This game's a long way from completion (just past design stage really) so there's nothing concrete to tell you other than it's a platform shoot-'em-up, and err, it's got spies in it. Sorry.

Capital Radio soldiers

Not of great relevance to the history of Mega Drive gaming as we know it, but vaguely interesting: evidently Capital Radio's spy in the sky traffic-report helicopter crew spend most of the time pretending that they're actually playing *Desert Strike*. Mad gits.

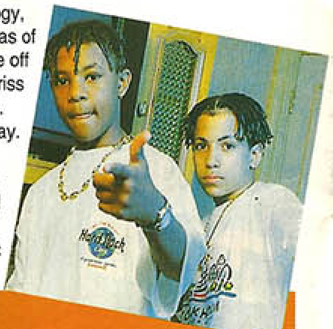
Evidently, screams of "Low fuel", "Warning: low armour", "beep-beep-beep" and "INCOMING!" regularly terrify the ground crew, who are only now just getting used to the idea of having to humour two would-be Gulf heroes.

Well done. You murdered 500 people

Make your own pop video!

Yep the Mega CD is a marvellous piece of technology, but what's really needed (and you can forget all ideas of these so-called "good games") to make it really take off is a "make your own pop video" package starring Kriss Kross and "global super group" C&C Music Factory. Hmm. Well, this is what Sega's come up with anyway.

Evidently you'll need "awesome talent and lightning reflexes" as you select, edit and slice your video footage into shape. Exciting stuff, eh? Crikey!



Take a pop video and fart around with it

PLACE YOUR BETS!

Razorsoft are a strange outfit. Not content with pushing the boundaries of weirdness with *Jerry Glanville's Pig Skin Footbrawl*, one of their projects for 1993 is a game called *Hooves of Thunder*. Yep, *Hooves Of Thunder* is a horse-racing game. Quite how it will play, what it's all about, whether you get to play a jockey, a gambler, a steaming great thoroughbred or the geezer who has to go around afterwards with a shovel and... (well, you know) has yet to be divulged. We wait with bated breath.

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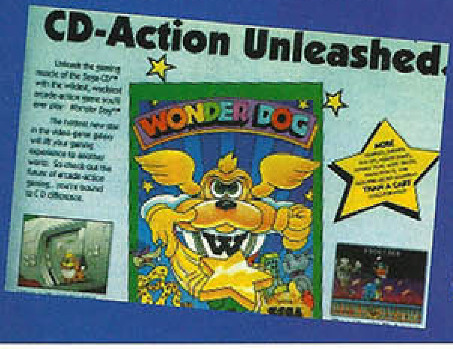
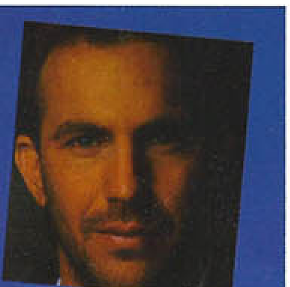
SEGA USA AND JVC SAY...



MEGA SAYS...

Now that's not entirely true, is it? Apart from the animated intro sequence (not that special) *Wonderdog* offers nothing more than that which a standard cart chucks out – and both Sega and JVC know it. Whether it's due to the incredible talent of Sega's cart programmers or the laziness of their CD designers remains a mystery, but the fact remains that if Sega USA are seriously advertising the Mega CD's powers off the back of *Wonderdog*, then they're selling the Mega CD short. Shame.



Bull "bull" Durham

Next month "Bull" Durham will again laugh in the face of yet more advertising "enthusiasm" and tweak the nose of inaccuracies in the name of PR. What a guy.

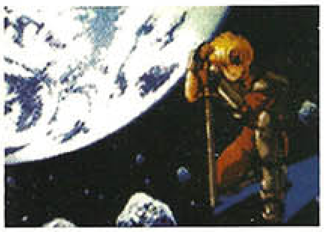
ANYONE FOR *MORTAL COMBAT?*

Are you sitting comfortably? Right then, we'll begin:

Once upon a time there was a programming team called Probe, the members of which were very good at making computer games. The team made games called *Terminator*, *Alien 3* and *Terminator 2* on a wonderful machine called a Mega Drive.

In the same kingdom, there also lived a coin-op called *Mortal Combat*. *Mortal Combat* lived in an arcade and was loved by many video game players – some people even thought that as a beat-'em-up it was even better than *Streetfighter 2!*

One day Probe met *Mortal Combat*. Probe liked *Mortal Combat* so much that the company decided to make a game just i… (That's enough litigious fairy stories – Neil)

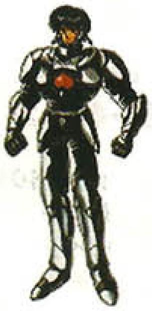


Phantasy Star 4: **it's bigger, it's better and it's, er, not finished**

Phantasy Star 4: an update

RPG fans haven't had much to shout about recently, but with *Phantasy Star 4* (the fourth instalment of the most successful Mega Drive RPG saga) well and truly on its way, MEGA is proud to bring you news of progress from the programmers themselves.

Fans of the series will be interested to hear that *Phantasy Star 4* will actually be set a generation later than *Phantasy Star 2*, and so is not a direct sequel to the enormous *Phantasy Star 3*. The game will centre on your main character, Rudie Ashuru, and up to four other accompanying characters, who will join you on your adventure. The gameplaying style looks set to continue in the same successful format as the previous games, but the gameplay area and complexity look set to become even bigger than the (quite frankly, enormous) area covered in *Phantasy Star 3*. Take a look at the programmers' character designs to get an idea of what's in store.



Unfortunately, don't expect to see a finished English version before the end of the year.

ANYONE SMELL A RAT?

Well, it's a mouse

Hot on the heels of Sega following up Nintendo's SuperScope with the Menacer comes news of a new Sega mouse (Nintendo's mouse has been very successful) for use with Mega CD titles and games such as *Lemmings*. A mouse is like a joystick – it can be used to guide a crosshair around a screen simply by rolling the mouse (so called because the device with its lead looks like one, kind of) in the direction you want the crosshair to move.

Due for release at the huge Computer Electronics Show (CES) going on in Las Vegas as you read this, the Sega mouse should be available in the UK when the Mega CD is released.

BUSMAN'S HOLIDAY

If you've ever fancied the idea of working in the video game industry, then this little corner of MEGA CITY could help point you in the right direction or just make you think "now why didn't I ever consider doing that?". This month it's EASN's resident musical expert.

NO. 5: PR PERSON (MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER)

NAME:
Simon Jeffrey, Electronic Arts

AGE: 27

JOB: DESCRIPTION:
In charge of all the marketing, advertising, PR and everything to do with the image of Electronic Arts and their games. Demonstrates games and books ads with mags, co-ordinates promotions and ad campaigns, is EA's voice to the outside world.

RELEVANT QUALIFICATIONS:
A degree in zoology (although why you need a degree in zoology to work at EA is beyond us).

ADDITIONAL QUALIFICATIONS:
None relevant to the job, except a keen interest in computer and video games.

PREVIOUS JOBS:
Simon was a marine biologist. This meant sailing around in a yacht off the coast of Greece for two years, so why did he give it up?

FIRST BREAK:
Simon joined Electronic Arts five years ago and got a lowly job in Customer Services. From there he has worked his way up the ladder and now looks down on everybody else.

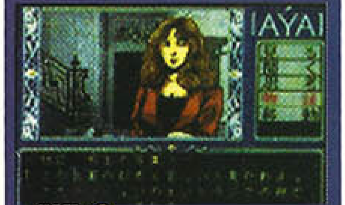
GOOD THINGS ABOUT THE JOB:
Simon says working with all the magazines is fun and he also gets to look (and play) an enormous amount of software. It's also a nice industry to work in and even though there's a lot of competition, everyone gets on well with each other.

BAD THING ABOUT THE JOB:
There's one helluva lot of work and 11-hour days are very common. You also work at weekends, so you don't have much time to get out and about.

ADVICE:
Don't aim too high and start from the bottom. Get relevant experience for any job in a software company and then work your way up.

NEXT MONTH!
Yet more secrets of success from some lucky git who's got a full-time job working with video games.

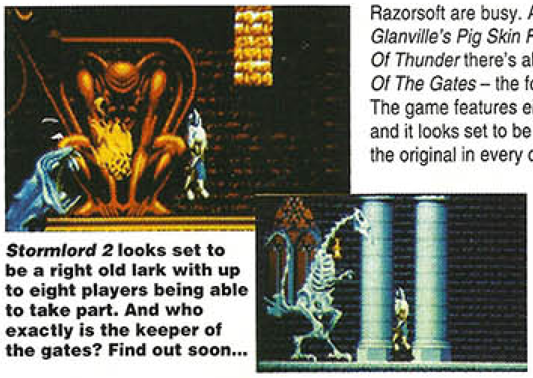
MEGA CD UPDATE



PSYCHIC DETECTIVE VOL. 3 AYA
(Virgin)

Another highly acclaimed PC adventure game is making its way to the Mega CD. This time, a Mr Furoyaki proposes a particularly strange mission that will stretch your detective powers and your cunning (not to say unsporting, I mean what chance does a criminal have?) ability to read people's minds, to the limit.

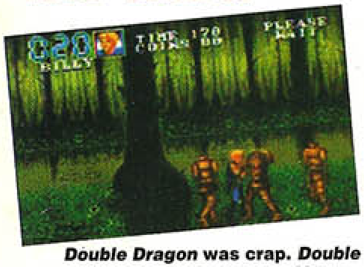
KEEPER OF THE GATES: STORMLORD 2



***Stormlord 2* looks set to be a right old lark with up to eight players being able to take part. And who exactly is the keeper of the gates? Find out soon...**

Razorsoft are busy. As well as *Jerry Glanville's Pig Skin Footbrawl* and *Hooves Of Thunder* there's also news of *Keeper Of The Gates* – the follow up to *Stormlord*. The game features eight platform levels and it looks set to be an improvement on the original in every department. One gameplay novelty is the multi-player option in which up to six players can compete alternately. We'll review it just as soon as we get our hands on it.

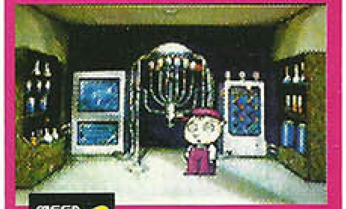
Double Dragon: the third



***Double Dragon* was crap. *Double Dragon 2* was average. Mmm...**

Flying Edge will soon present *Double Dragon 3* – the further adventures of violent brothers Billy and Jimmy Lee. There's a weapons shop this time around, but other than that it's the same game as it ever was...

MEGA CD UPDATE



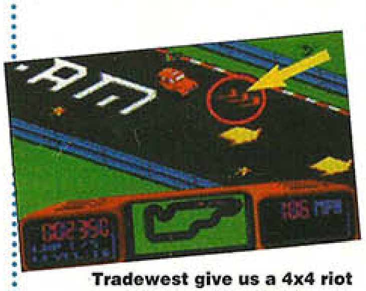
SWITCH
(Virgin)

Jokes, gags, punchlines and assorted miscellaneous hilarity – evidently this game's chocka with side-splitting comic potential and it's your job to crack each and every single gem going. Yep, that's your brief – to be as funny as possible.

In the world you explore there are 1000 jokes to be discovered (like a rake lying on the floor for example, which you're dutifully expected to stand on – you get the picture?). Quite how funny the gags actually are and whether the game's any good or not remains to be seen, but anything that helps up the comic value of MEGA has got to be welcomed, we're sure you'll agre... Ooops! Just slipped on a banana skin and landed on my head. Hurr hurr hurr. Oh dear...

CHAMPIONSHIP PRO-AM

Just as *Micro Machines* turns up and redefines our notion of just how rubber-burningly(!?) great a racing game can be (see page 32), Tradewest announce completion of their own racer, *Championship Pro-Am*. Three different vehicles, loads of wacky power ups and 24 courses make for a varied (if not necessarily high quality – hey, they're only numbers, OK?) game. We'll review it soon.



Tradewest give us a 4x4 riot in *Championship Pro-Am*

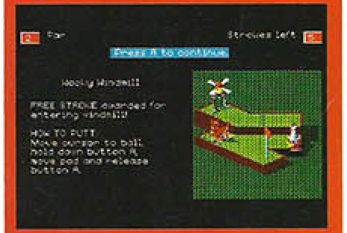
VOYAGE TO THE BOWELS OF THE BACK CATALOGUE

You know the GOOD Mega Drive games (just check out the Top 100 starting on page 76), you know the BAD Mega Drive games (there's always a couple of ploppers released each month – just scan the review pages) but Voyage To The Bowels Of The Back Catalogue is where you must cautiously hold your nose as you're introduced to the downright UGLY Mega Drive games.

Go on then, wheel in this month's victim...

ZANY GOLF

Some carts are just destined to be crap. Some games just never actually ever get a fair chance – take *Zany Golf* for example – crazy golf on the Mega Drive. I mean, seriously? What the hell were Electronic Arts (the programming team behind this farcical dollop of what all games shouldn't be) playing at?



Wacky Windmill

FREE STROKE awarded for entering windmill!

HOW TO PUTT
Move cursor to ball
hold down button A
move pad and release
button A

***Zany Golf*. Everything a good golf game shouldn't be... and less!**

It's like trying to program a kite-flying game, or a disco-dancing game – you're never, ever going to catch the fun of the real thing. The joy of playing crazy golf is the cheating, the hiding your mate's ball, laughing at the game old granny on the next hole hacking away for all she's worth at completely the wrong ball, attempting glorious chip shots over the windmill, screaming "INCOMING!" at the top of your voice and then watching as half the other competitors fling themselves at the floor in terror... you know the kind of thing.

There is certainly no fun to be found in methodically trogging round the course playing the game properly. But that's exactly what *Zany Golf* offers. Thing is, they don't even make a decent job of it. The graphics are awful, the gameplay stinks, the ball moves about as smoothly as a three-legged dog over hurdles and the whole sad, shambling, mockery of a video game limps along at its own nauseating pace until either: a) you die of boredom; or b) you discover just how far it's possible to lob a cart when truly motivated.

NEXT MONTH!

We search long and hard into the Mega Drive back catalogue in order to dig up some festering old pile of horse waste to slag off. Why? Well, simply because we're utter gits and take great delight in pulling apart something that some poor programmer has spent months working on. Tough!

1992: THAT YEAR THAT,

MEGA takes a brief look back at last year and highlights some of the events that may (or may not) have occurred

Renting of Sega carts was re-legalised. And rumour had it that Nintendo scrapped plans for renting handled software after deciding that calling their high street outlets "Rent Boy" would perhaps be a bad idea.

Gamesmaster (the TV series) was born. The initial viewing figures were in excess of three million. Neil West appeared on the show more times than either scuba girl or Dominik Diamond and the viewing figures gradually sank. Mmmm...

The Mega CD was announced for an autumn release. Then, in a shock statement from the Met Office (made through a Sega representative), it was discovered that autumn was to be rescheduled to occur during the Christmas period and could possibly extend into the New Year and beyond depending on when the Mega CD would be ready.

The Wondermega was launched in Japan. It's a Mega CD, Mega Drive and karaoke machine all rolled into one sexy looking unit. It's also slightly expensive and quite possibly will never appear in the UK. And a British firm called Plop-o-tronic launched the BlunderMega: basically a cut-down Mega Drive with a tape loading facility similar to that used on the Sinclair Spectrum. However, the budget price of £5.99 plus p&p failed to ignite public interest and the machine and its creators disappeared without trace.

DOWN WITH THE HEDGEHOG!

Squashed hedgehogs – tragic, and yet, slightly amusing, don't you think?

Those of you who are lucky/unlucky/stupid/smart/lost enough to have spent time in London recently may have noticed a giant 40-foot hedgehog (of the squashed variety) stuck to the side of Sega's new offices. The accompanying headline made merry of the fact that this hedgehog obviously hadn't been as fast as Sonic and so, well – hence the tyre marks.

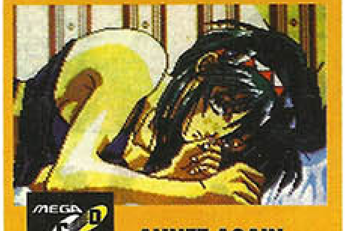
Some old gimmer association (or something) have complained, however, arguing that the hedgehog (of the squashed variety) is in "bad taste". So the hedgehog's coming down...

Booo.

Q-SOUND ARRIVES IN ARCADES

Capcom have released news that their latest coin-ops are to feature Q-sound, a scientific process that adapts stereo sound to offer greater clarity and erm, well, lots of other clever things. The idea is that if you position your head a certain distance between the speakers, then something wonderful happens to your ears. This process is perfect for the arcades, because (unlike listening to a stereo at home) players can't move from the coin-op and speakers can be positioned accordingly. Whether this technology makes it across to home consoles or not, we'll just have to wait and see.

MEGA CD UPDATE



ANNET AGAIN

(Virgin)

Earnest Evans is Annet's boyfriend (for those of you bothered with the finer romantic implications of Sega's Mega CD release strategy) and hence our swash-buckling hero gets to appear in this game, the follow up to the *El Viento* series.

The action takes place in the evil Hastur's castle. Annet draws on her magical abilities (and hunky boyfriend) to restore peace to the free world and return Hastur to the intergalactic cess pit.

Office of Fair Trading Investigates

Radio One and the Today newspaper caused a nationwide stir on Wednesday 23 December when the subject of their lead news story was the fact that the Office of Fair Trading was "sniffing around Sega and Nintendo's cart prices".

Of course, everyone would love to see a drop in prices, but as MEGA reported in issue two, £40 isn't the complete rip-off everyone immediately assumes it is. Still, this didn't stop three radio DJs getting Neil live on air to talk about it (two of them actually turned out to be regular MEGA readers).

As for the Office of Fair Trading itself, a spokesman, Mark Kram, tried to play the story down. He told MEGA: "We've had a handful of complaints and hence we are looking at the situation – we have to investigate every matter that comes to our attention. But at the moment this is just an informal enquiry: this has been hyped out of proportion – our enquiries are at a very minimal stage."

WAS THE ER, WASN'T

Sega embarked on a £2 million ad campaign in conjunction with ITV on the European Football Championships. Sega did well out of it, but we'd really rather not discuss England's fortunes if that's all right with you. Nintendo on the other hand were so confident about their new machine (the SNES) that they decided to skip advertising and let word of mouth work its magic instead. Indeed, so confident were they that they also decided to release hardly any software for it. SNES owners initially had a choice of four titles, which quickly rose to four the following month, and after only two months the software base was a stunning four titles!

Rezo Abdolali of Germany became Sega European champ and Danny Curley was quoted as saying, "Hrmph! Bloody 'ell". Meanwhile, in Napoli, Guiseppe Garriboldi entered the Guinness Book Of Records for finishing *Sonic The Hedgehog* in 4 hours and 13 minutes – The longest time anyone has ever taken.

MEGA magazine was launched. The skill and experience of the editorial team is second to none: Neil West (he has a politics degree and can dance like no one else), Andy Dyer (eats, sleeps and breathes Nintendo games), Paul Mellerick (wears a cap and listens to Nirvana all day, every day) and Amanda Dyson (girlie). As expected the mag went straight into the number one spot, won dozens of awards, got noticed by Hollywood and was turned into a blockbuster movie called "Three Men And A Little Lady".

SONIC
RINGS 16
TAILS
RINGS 8

Sonic 2 was released worldwide on the same day. It was released on a Tuesday so the launch campaign was very cunningly called *Sonic 2's Day*. And what a day to remember (Yes, we all went out and got horribly drunk I seem to remember – Neil).

Funnily enough, only two days later, a revolutionary pair of psychedelic insulated sports socks were launched with a campaign title of Cosmic Thermals Day. (I think perhaps this glance at the old year has come to a rather pathetic end, don't you? – Neil)

Karate cart kicks in

Japanese game designers Electrobrain have just started work on *Best Of The Best Championship Karate*, a (you guessed it) karate game. Robot beat-'em-ups, street fights, boxing games and punch-ups are ten a penny on the Mega Drive, so it's good to see a pure sports simulation on its way.

Also, don't forget *Panza Kick Boxing* – coming soon...

MEGA CD UPDATE

SHERLOCK HOLMES CONSULTING DETECTIVE VOLUME 2

(Virgin)

More real-life video footage sets the tone for the second instalment of the game that was used to showcase the Mega CD in the USA. You play the part of Sherlock (more likely to be Sheer-luck if Neil gets hold of it, ha ha ha) Holmes in the case of the Two Lions, The Pilfered Paintings and The Murdered Munitions Magnate. Clues lie everywhere, just make sure you pay close attention to the video footage to spot them. Out soon.

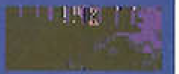
R.E.M in Mega CD shocker! Well, kind of. Warner Communications have just released a catalogue of their music that will be available for use in Mega CD games as samples or sound tracks, including a couple of tracks from R.E.M. So don't be surprised when your Mega CD is so hip to the hop-skippity beat (erm, daddio) that it, er, starts going to discos, or something. Erm. (You're fired – Neil)

THE Q S IN THE NEWS!

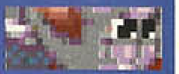
Do you know everything and anything about the Mega Drive? Or do you just like to *think* you know everything and anything about the Mega Drive. Fancy putting your skills to the test, do you? Well, below are 20 mind-numbingly tedious questions that are all (somehow) related to the Mega Drive. Scribble your answers down on a bit of paper and then turn to page 98 to see how you've done. Good luck, and no cheating!

1. When was the Mega Drive first launched in this country? Was it:
September 1990
November 1990
August 1993
2. How many *John Madden American Football* games have there been?
3. Which WWF Superstar performs his Body Slam in the game *WWF Super Wrestle Mania?*
4. *Bio-Hazard Battle* goes under a different name in Japan. What is it?
5. Without looking, what percentage did *King Salmon* get in issue three of MEGA?
6. Which cartridge game has been awarded the lowest percentage in MEGA?
7. How many rings do you have to collect in the sixth special stage on *Sonic 2?*
8. What does FMV stand for?
9. Does the Mega CD have a battery back-up that stores game information?
10. Which company makes the *Streetfighter 2* coin-op (and might also be programming the Mega Drive game)?
11. Which game is the odd one out?
Streets of Rage 2
Road Rash 2
Joe Montana 2
Sonic 2
John Madden '93
12. Name the five celebrities who have been interviewed in MEGA?
13. What was the first 16Mbit cart?
14. How many buttons does SEGA's new six-button joypad have?
15. In real life, who is Bull Durham?

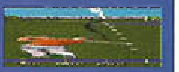
16. Which game is this tired screenshot from?



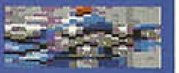
17. Which game is this topsy turvy screenshot from?



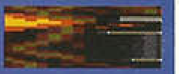
18. Which game is this clubbed out screenshot from?



19. Which game is this bendy stretchy screenshot from?



20. Which game is this warped screenshot from?



Right, now turn to page 98 to see how you did. Are you to be laughed at heartily in the face, or are you a Sega god? Go on then, what are you waiting for?

THE CHARTS

Right, now we want everyone to pretend they *don't know* and act all surprised when they hear what's number one, OK? Now cue the charts...

OFFICIAL TOP 20

This month | Last month | Game Name | Mega Top 100 position

① ■(NE) **Sonic 2** Ⓜ 02
There are many surprising things in this world, but this ain't one of 'em. The spunky spiky one does exactly what was expected

② ▼(01) **Euro Club Soccer** Ⓜ 95
Look chaps, this has been here for bloody months. It's a footy game, and that's all I'm prepared to say on the subject

③ ▲(07) **Desert Strike** Ⓜ 17
(Groan) Fab helicopter sim from Electronic Arts. This too has been around longer than Stonehenge. I dunno, it's a thankless task

④ ■(04) **Taz-Mania** Ⓜ 21
I only ever wanted to be a writer. When I got the job of staff writer I was overwhelmed. "WOW," I thought, "this is fab"

⑤ ▼(02) **NHLPA '93** Ⓜ 03
And indeed it was, for a while. (Oh, *EA Hockey* game by the way.) But then, as time went on, I had to do more unpleasant tasks

⑥ ▼(05) **Alien 3** Ⓜ 84
I thought tips were bad enough, but by God I hadn't reckoned with the nightmare of the charts. *Alien 3* is a fairly nice platformer

⑦ ▼(03) **Speedball 2** Ⓜ 32
It's all very well for you reading them, but piggin' hell, you wouldn't believe how dull it is fiddling with all the positions. Sigh...

⑧ ▼(06) **Spr Monaco GP2** Ⓜ 05
Still hanging in there. This superb racing simulation is a must for any aspiring Ayrtons out there. Vrooom, screeech, etc

⑨ ▲(14) **Streets Of Rage** Ⓜ 08
The sequel to this stonking beat-'em-up will be out soon, and it should be brill. Maybe then this one will drop out of the charts

⑩ ▲(17) **Spr Thunderblade** Ⓜ —
Can't honestly say I've played this one, but Paul assures me that it's pretty dire. Still, the punters seem to like it. Strange!

⑪ ▼(10) **Super Hang On** Ⓜ 61
⑫ ■(NE) **Madden '93** Ⓜ 01
⑬ ▲(18) **Road Rash** Ⓜ 06
⑭ ▼(08) **Alex Kidd Castle** Ⓜ —
⑮ ▼(13) **PGA Tour Golf** Ⓜ 12
⑯ ▼(11) **Terminator** Ⓜ 44
⑰ ▼(09) **Italia '90** Ⓜ —
⑱ ■(NE) **LHX Attack Chopper** Ⓜ 27
⑲ ■(NE) **Castle of Illusion** Ⓜ 26
⑳ ■(NE) **Quackshot** Ⓜ 09

SOLD!

James is 10, comes from Church Stretton and lurves *Pitfighter*

***California Games* has just been bagged by 10-year-old Zak**

Carrot-topped Adrian is only 12 and fancies a spot of *Alien 3* bashing

And finally, Jolene (Jolene, Jolene, Jo-lee-ee-eeen) has settled for *Back To The Future III*, poor girl. Oh, she's 13 and comes from Shrewsbury. More next issue

Official charts compiled by Gallup and ELSPA sponsored by Penguin. Import charts compiled by Whizz-Kid Games

IMPORT TOP 20

This month | Last month | Game Name | Mega Top 100 position

① ■(NE) **Sonic 2** Ⓜ 02
"SPIKY SPEED MERCHANT IN TOP SPOT SHOCKER." Sonic is wiping the floor in both the official and import charts

② ■(NE) **NHLPA '93** Ⓜ 03
Oh now come on boys, this is in the official chart too. I've already done all this over there on the left. Gimme a break

③ ■(NE) **Madden '93** Ⓜ 01
Anyone who's spent a few years being dead may like to know that this is the greatest American footy game of all time

④ ▼(01) **Lemmings** Ⓜ 07
Ooh lovely. This one's only in the import chart. That means I can say lots of interesting things about it without repeating mys...

⑤ ▲(17) **RBI4** Ⓜ —
... Cack! I ran out of room on that last one. This, however, is a baseball sim and it's not half bad. Baseball fans take note

⑥ ▲(09) **Rampart** Ⓜ 77
A splendid two-player game in which both parties try to destroy each other's castles while trying to rebuild their own. Odd, but good

⑦ ▼(06) **Greendog** Ⓜ —
This, apparently, is doing really well, but when we saw it, we thought it was decidedly average. Take our advice, give it a miss

⑧ ▼(07) **Wd Trophy Soccer** Ⓜ 95
For those who weren't paying attention last month, this is the US version of *Euro Club Soccer*. Enough said, I think you'll agree

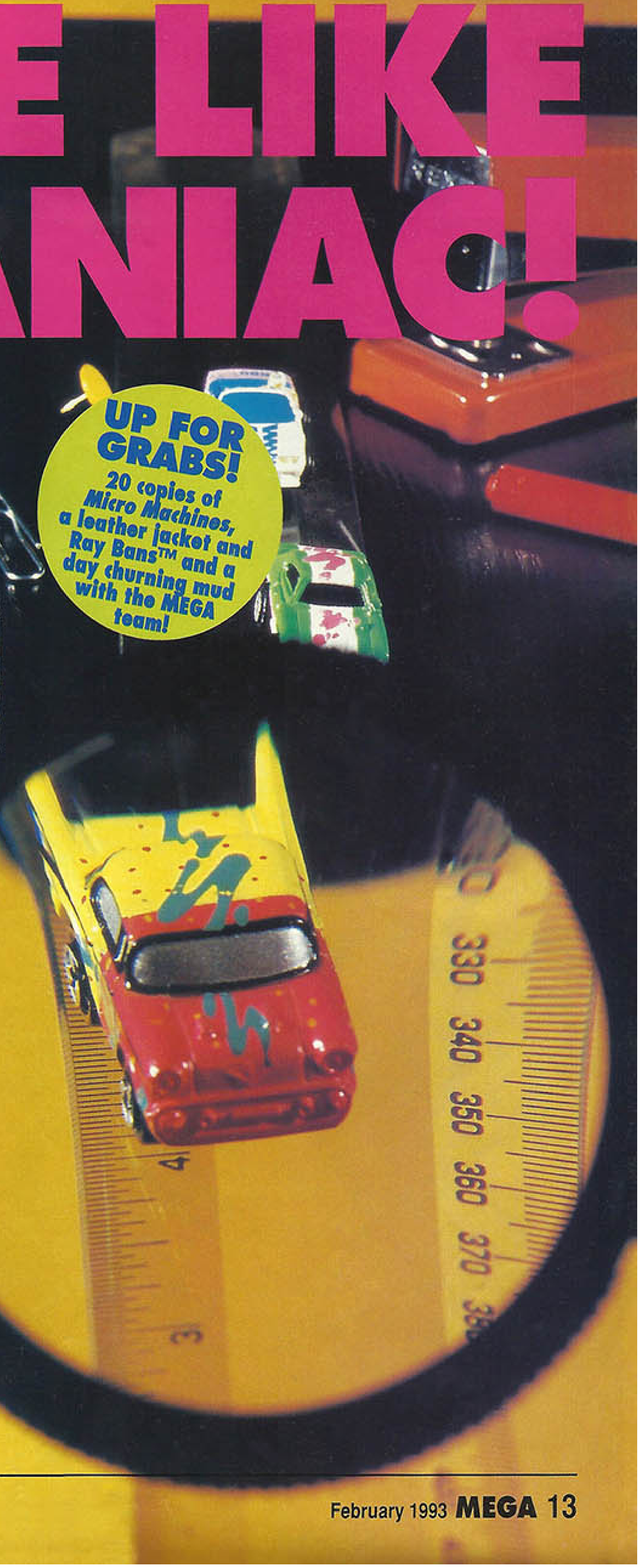
⑨ ▼(02) **LHX Chopper** Ⓜ 27
EA, EA, E-bloody-A. That's all I ever seem to hear about these days. Another fabulous helicopter jobby from the guys. YAAWN!

⑩ ■(10) **Steel Talons** Ⓜ —
Despite being a pile of cack, *Steel Talons* holds its position. That's it for this month. Hope you enjoyed the charts as much as I did

⑪ ■(NE) **Death Duel** Ⓜ —
⑫ ▲(14) **Cyber Cop** Ⓜ 75
⑬ ■(NE) **Joe Montana '93** Ⓜ 42
⑭ ■(NE) **Smash TV** Ⓜ —
⑮ ■(NE) **Super High Impact** Ⓜ —
⑯ ▼(15) **Aquatic Games** Ⓜ 56
⑰ ▼(05) **Dragon's Fury** Ⓜ 52
⑱ ■(18) **Predator 2** Ⓜ —
⑲ ■(NE) **Crueball** Ⓜ —
⑳ ■(NE) **PGA Tour Golf** Ⓜ 12

DRIVE LIKE A MANIAC!

Have you got what it takes to cut Neil up through a chicane? Maybe you fancy trading laps with Amanda? Or maybe you'd just like to compare skids with Andy? Whatever, read on...



UP FOR GRABS!

20 copies of *Micro Machines*, a leather jacket and Ray Bans™ and a day churning mud with the MEGA team!

Micro Machines is here and it's rather fab. No, really – it's lovely. And to celebrate the event of producing a game of such utter fabness, Codemasters have decided to spend a whole load of dosh on you lot. Quite why they don't spend their money on jetting off to Hawaii for an unfeasible amount of celebratory Pina Coladas is no reflection on their sanity: it's all down to the economic reality that a week long rum-binge wouldn't exactly warrant two pages of coverage in MEGA. A competition to win a whole load of games and the chance to go go-karting, however, is a different kettle of fish. Market forces at work, dear readers – almost beautiful.

And so now we can present to you the chance to win a place in the MEGA/*Micro Machines* Go-Karting Championships. Eight of you lot will race against the MEGA team and a Codemasters team in a bid to find the all-time *Micro Machines* champ, who will then find him/herself the proud owner of a custom-designed *Micro Machines* leather jacket and a pair of Ray Bans™ sunglasses (just like wot Spider wears in the game).

There are also 20 runner-up prizes of *Micro Machines* carts plus a whole load of other *Micro Machines* gear.

Neil's sniggers were later cut short as Andy's heap rolled over his head

The only downer is that there is an entry restriction. The go-karts actually shift quite fast and they're quite big, so you need to be at least 14 years of age and of average build – call us dwarf-hating, ageist old fascists if you must.

So that's where it's at, but how do you actually win? It really couldn't be easier. All you have to do is send in a photo of you looking incredulously (as if to say "just look at the state of that. I mean someone seriously drives this heap of rubbish") at the most decrepit car you can find. Easy right? Well, not that easy, because the owner of the car has to be in it at the time.

The eight senders of the photos which show the funniest expressions on both parties faces (yours and the guy or gal in the car) wins – and yes, you can set up the whole sordid affair if you want, but it wouldn't really be entering into the spirit of things.

We've printed an example of the sort of thing we mean featuring none other than Andy Dyer's trusty, yet strangely "crap" (You mean "full of character" surely? – Andy) Vauxhall Shove-it (Chevette – Andy) to give you an idea. We're sure, however, that you'll come up with something better.

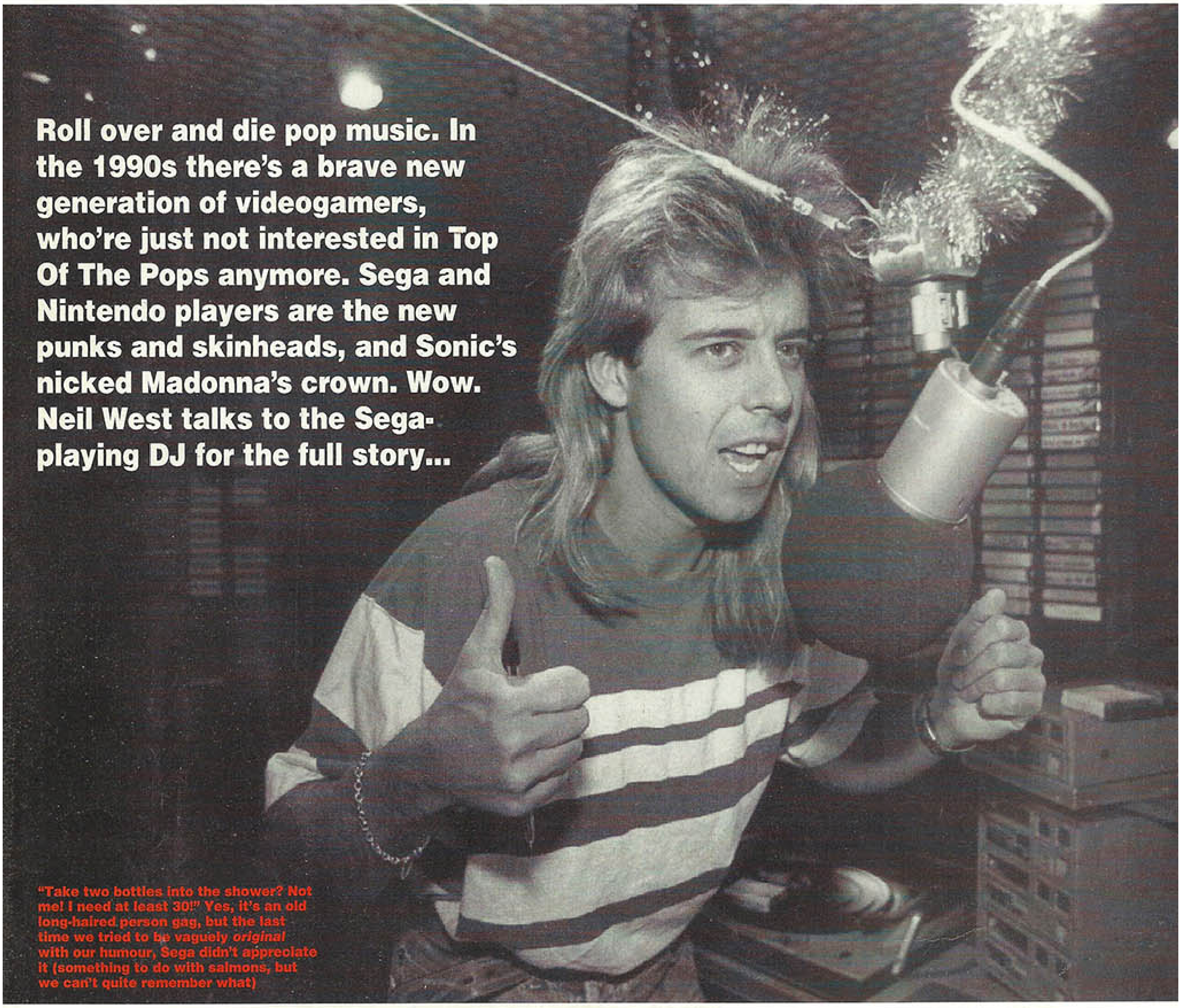
Send your photos to "Now That's What I Call A Heap Of Old Junk" Compo, MEGA, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon, BA1 2BW. Get snapping!

OPPRESSION

Yes, rules – sorry. We do, however, feebly try and liven the whole sorry business up with a few "joke" rules, but they're never really that funny and they do nothing to help shift that feeling that the twentieth century sucks.

1. All entries must reach us before 28 February 1993 or else they get recycled.
2. No employees of Future Publishing or Codemasters are allowed to enter. Ha.
3. The editor's grip on all matters involving what is (or indeed what is not) a fair decision has always been a tad shaky, but unfortunately his decision as to who wins is final.
4. In order to go go-karting you must be over 14 years of age. Sorry.

Does PAT SHARP reckon that Sonic is killing Rock 'n' Roll?



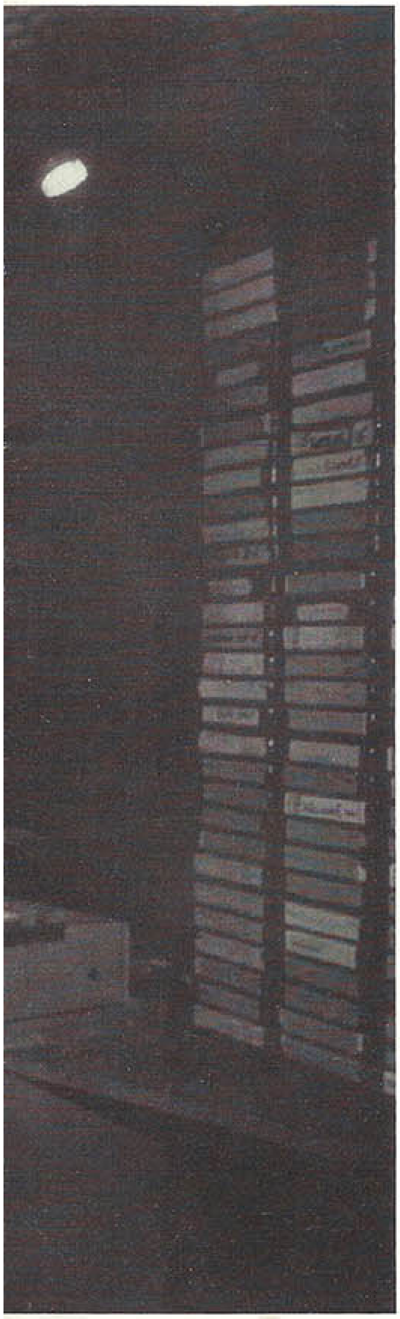
Roll over and die pop music. In the 1990s there's a brave new generation of videogamers, who're just not interested in Top Of The Pops anymore. Sega and Nintendo players are the new punks and skinheads, and Sonic's nicked Madonna's crown. Wow. Neil West talks to the Sega-playing DJ for the full story...

"Take two bottles into the shower? Not me! I need at least 30!" Yes, it's an old long-haired person gag, but the last time we tried to be vaguely *original* with our humour, Sega didn't appreciate it (something to do with salmons, but we can't quite remember what)

So will video games totally replace pop music? Will arcades replace discos? Will Game Gears replace Walkmans? Pat Sharp speaks out...

Record sales may be falling, but video game sales are breaking all records. Needless to say, record industry bosses are worried.

As both a Capital Radio DJ and Sega gamesplayer, Pat Sharp has kept a close watch on both the huge drop in single sales and the phenomenal increase in the popularity of video games over the last two years. A lot of gloomy record company bosses and grinning software publishers have been watching as well. Now, when you bear in mind that your "average" video game player is reckoned to be exactly the same sort of geezer who is supposed to be buying singles, it doesn't take the analytical mind of Hercule Poirot to start wondering if there's a connection between the rise of one and the fall of the other...



THE DEMISE OF DISCO

So is pop music being killed off by Sonic, Mario and all our other pixellated pals? In five years time will Top of The Pops be a long-forgotten TV relic only remembered by all us old crumblies? Will Game Gears replace Walkmans completely? Will discos be replaced by amusement arcades? And (perhaps best of all) will girls called Sonia be urged to change the last letter of their names to a c?

Pop music as we know it has only been around for the last 30 years, so it's not as if it's engraved in stone that people must be into it. Why can't it disappear as quickly as it appeared? No reason at all really. The question is, of course, are we witnessing its premature death now, at the hands of a blood-stained Sonic The Hedgehog? We asked Pat Sharp:

"Single sales have been falling, and it's quite ironic that it's happened seemingly hand in hand with the increased popularity of consoles. But there were still 52 million singles sold in the UK last year – I mean that's almost one for every person in the country."

But sales are polarising. The big singles are selling a million, yet it's possible to get into the top ten with just 10,000 sales. Overall, sales are down.

> **"The majority of the stuff that gets into the charts doesn't even have a *tune*. It's just forgettable, appalling crap"**

"Yeah," agreed Pat. "You can be at number one for seven or eight weeks and only sell 300,000 singles. You just don't have to sell that many singles to get into the charts these days."

OK, so if the record-buying public have started to buy video games instead, why?

"The decline has come about for two reasons. Firstly, people have decided that paying £1.99 for a single when you can pick up the album for seven or eight quid doesn't make sense. And paying £5 for a CD single is completely ridiculous."

IN THE GOOD OLD DAYS...

"Also, singles just don't seem to be what they used to be. They're either re-issues, or covers, or instrumentals or just computer noises – whatever. The fact is that they're not what they were. They aren't big, big records with a typical B-side, they're not as commercial as they used to be: they're just very trendy, easy-to-make dance songs that no-one's spent very much time putting together. They're not well-produced pop products any more. You just don't seem to get very many classic songs any more. There are loads of people chasing lots of chart places which aren't very well filled by not very good artists."

Oops. Looks like we've touched a bit of a raw nerve here. Carry on Pat...

"The amount of bands that have appeared on Top Of The Pops over the last two years that have only had one or two hits now make up the majority. And most of these weren't even real records – the artists weren't really singing, they were just dancing or going "Hurrr" in the middle. There aren't many good pop songs being written any more. This is being reflected on my play list at Capital. Most of our play list is old stuff. In an average week there's at least a quarter, if not half, of the chart that will never get played, because the songs have sold only about three copies, in Grantham or something. Small sales are enough to put these records into the chart, but the rest of the British public don't really want to hear them – people would rather hear an old song by Madonna or Simply Red. The majority of the stuff that gets into the charts doesn't even have a tune. These songs are just totally, forgettable, nonsensical crap."

(He's still going!) "The amount of decent songs that we heard last year can be counted on one hand. As I said, the situation started to change about two years ago when video games started to take off."

OK, so it's only the single market that you feel is suffering at the moment. But singles have always been the promotional tool of record companies, with a view to shifting albums. If the single market collapses, then surely album sales will suffer too, and with them the music business as a whole. Can we expect to see Phil Collins, Bono and Axl Rose out on the streets as yesterday's has-beens?

"No, music will always survive. It depends how quickly we can get rid of this rave stuff. But I don't think it will effect too many adults: they may well buy video games, but I think the more mature, perhaps more intelligent, music listener won't give up on music. These people are not going to say "oh, I'm never going to buy a record again or I'm not going to go to this concert because I've got to have this latest video game."

Capital Radio broadcasting from Euston in London now relies on classic golden oldies for its main diet of music – "the new stuff's crap"

JUST A MUSIC SUBSTITUTE?

So what do you think about the idea that people got fed up with all this crap music and so started spending money on video games instead?

"Yeah, that's a point of view. The stuff in the charts just isn't worth listening to anymore."

So people are playing video games instead. Do you think maybe Sonic and Mario have replaced bands as the idols of a whole generation? Like, I used to be well into (ahem) Duran Duran, but I haven't been into a pop band in the same way since. Maybe people have got into video game characters and systems in the same way that people used to get into pop bands?

"Yeah, yeah I think you're right in that respect – I'd never thought of it like that."

My own particular theory is that Stock Aitken and Waterman killed Rock 'n' Roll and that Sonic inherited all the cash...

"Well, there's one thing I do know: I know the connection between Sonic The Hedgehog and Alfred The Great"

Go on...

"They've both got the same middle name! Arf!" Ⓜ

SOME FACTS...

Make of them what you will:

- Simply Red's Stars album is the best selling CD ever in the UK. It was 1992's best selling LP and made £20 million. *Sonic 2* made £27 million in just the month before Christmas.
- USA record industry bosses reckon 34% of the US music market has been nicked by video games.
- The video game boom must affect music sales: "You can't get a half billion market out of nowhere," said Simon Burke – Managing Director of Virgin Stores.
- The two fastest growing magazines in Britain are console mags, meanwhile No 1 magazine has closed, Smash Hits has dropped 13%, and Fast Forward, belying its name, is down 22%.
- Top Of The Pops viewing figures are down.
- Most of the big record shops (like Our Price and Virgin) are now selling console and computer kit as well as music stuff.

COMPETITION

WIN! 25

CARTS

The best beat-'em-up since Carter USM smacked Philip Schofield is coming to the Mega Drive. More good news is that Gamesville is reserving its first 25 copies of the game for MEGA readers. The question is, are you feeling lucky?

Yep, fabby old Gamesville (the company which provides us with most of our import games – albeit after much "AAAARGH! We've got only 20 minutes before deadline and why didn't we just run with that old game review instead of trying to get the latest stuff in?" hysteria from our good selves) is coughing up the readies for yet another MEGA giveaway.

This time we've lined up 25 copies of *Streetfighter 2* on the Mega Drive as prizes. If (and this is a possibility, because Sega still haven't officially announced the game's release) it turns out that *Streetfighter 2* never actually gets released, then our 25 winners will receive another Mega Drive cart instead. Now we can't say fairer than that (except, of course, we just did – but you get the point).

So, all you have to do to win is answer the following questions:

① How many characters are there to choose from in the standard *Streetfighter 2* coin-op?

② From the following *Streetfighter 2* characters, which is the odd one out?
• Ken • Guile • E Honda

③ From the following *Streetfighter 2* characters, which is the odd one out?
• Ryu • Zangief • E Honda

④ *Streetfighter 2* is the sequel to another coin-op. What was the name of the original coin-op?

Send your answers (complete with your name, age and address) on a postcard or sealed-down envelope to Hadoooooooooooooo-Ken! Compo, P O Box 10, Sunderland, SR4 6SN to arrive before 28 February, 1993.

NEED AN IMPORT? Ring Gamesville on 0293 541953 or check out the new Brighton store on 0273 620 814. Say MEGA sent you

THE OPPRESSIVE BITS

OK, so normally the MEGA team would like to think of itself as a free-wheeling, laid-back bunch of people, but here we get all oppressive and start throwing rules around. As a great philosopher probably once said, "without rules, MEGA's competitions crumble to dust". Bummer eh? Sorry, but there you go.

1. No employees of Future Publishing or Gamesville are allowed to enter.
2. If, for whatever reasons, *Streetfighter 2* never appears or isn't available, substitute prizes of similar value will be awarded instead.
3. Gamesville will endeavour to send carts to the winners as soon as possible after *Streetfighter 2* is released, but if circumstances beyond its or MEGA's control cause delays, we cannot be held accountable.
4. All entries must reach us before 28 February 1993.
5. Sorted!

ufi
metropolis
mombassa
m.k.
m.a.n.i.c.
tc 1991
urban jungle
tc 1992
b.m.ex
unity
4 love
sure is pure

colours

union city *recordings* compilation album

ucr

released 07 12 92
2x12" 33.3rpm - mc - cd
limited edition vinyl includes
white label of **mk** *always*
unavailable in the uk

Let's set the record straight. Is *Sonic* really evil? Will your addiction-crazed lust for your next fix of pixellated violence turn you to a life of crime? Don't laugh – Neil West and Jo Trotter hear from five people who believe that their video games ruined their lives...

Do video games SCREW YOU UP? (revisited)

There's no hard evidence to prove that playing video games is actually any more harmful than watching TV. Whereas there's plenty of scientific research to prop up a severely damning case against the likes of smoking or alcohol abuse, the anti-video game campaigners have so far had to rely solely on half-baked "first-hand experiences" and the nagging suspicions of worried parents.

To be fair, there's also the valid point that video games haven't been around long enough for any long-term studies to have reached any definite conclusions. After all, it was only about twenty years ago that it was finally decided that smoking was harmful.

But this lack of evidence hasn't (of course) stopped most national newspapers and seemingly hundreds of early-morning/regional "discussion" TV shows dragging on hastily-convinced "victims" of video games to "share" their experiences with a studio audience. It's enough to make you realise what a sensationalist, controversy-seeking world the media really is. But then (and this is the worrying bit) after realising that such high-minded criticisms are a tad pretentious and not just a little poncy, it's enough to make a little voice inside you wonder if there's actually any truth (I mean they might, just might, have a point) in the rumblings of worried parents, concerned teachers and perma-tanned men with microphones...

> **"I suddenly realised that my world had shrunk to the size of a TV screen"**

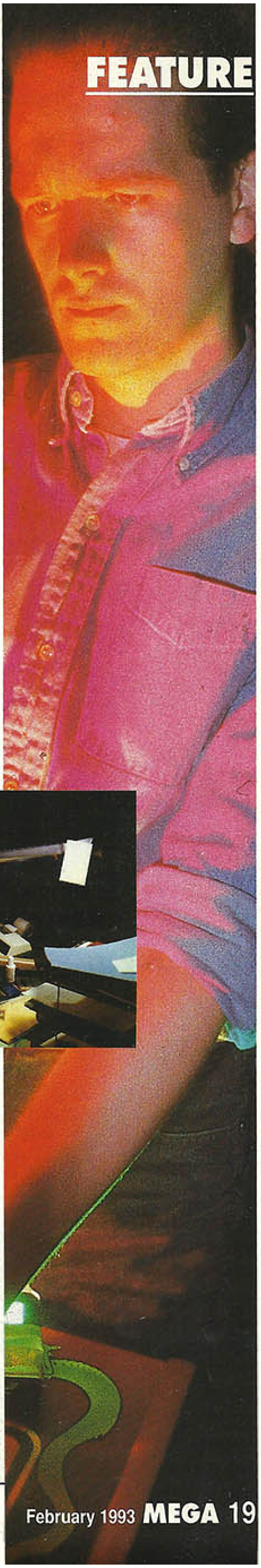
So we checked it out. Last month we spoke to Dr Dorothy Rowe who (despite being quoted in the TODAY newspaper in the context of someone who thought video games were harmful) confirmed that "video game addiction" is merely a symptom of a real problem elsewhere in someone's life: people seek control in their life or escape from the outside world. Video games offer this required feeling of control and escape on two levels. Firstly, (taking the most common example of "addicted" teenagers) throughout the land parents seemingly never have the faintest idea what a console is (exactly) let alone know how to set about plugging one in and having a good blast – hence the world of the video game is one in which a troubled teenager has superior control to that of his or her parents. Secondly, video games invariably place the player in the sturdy size twelves of an omnipotent, practically invincible, supremely-powerful hero. Again, it's that feeling of power that gives the buzz.

Problem solved we thought: there's nothing harmful about playing video games (for reasonable lengths of time of course) and any "compulsive playing" is not the fault of the computer game itself, it's just a sign that something is wrong elsewhere. We were convinced that there was absolutely nothing harmful in playing video games.

Since then, however, we've heard from five very different people each of whom firmly believes that the blame for their personal tragedy lies firmly and solely with a computer game, and each of whom has appeared on TV recently arguing their point of view.

Case re-opened? Well, yes – why not? It's time to set the record straight once and for all. Now we're not here to judge these people or accuse them of blaming the first (most obvious) symptom they see as opposed to identifying a deeper, more complex cause: we don't have the full stories and we're not qualified to come to any conclusions even if we knew all the facts. But in each case we've asked a professional counsellor or expert to give his or her opinion as to whether the video game is to blame – their comments make interesting reading.

So read on, and if any of these people's stories strike a chord with you, then maybe you've been hitting that console just a little bit too hard recently. Give it a rest, get some fresh air and do a bit of soul-searching. Let's go...



CASE STUDY NO.1: BROKEN MARRIAGE

Mark is 25, and lives in Cambridge. He is, however, moving to Liverpool to begin a "new life". Mark's computer addiction began five years ago.

"I was working in a supermarket and going to the pub with my mates at the weekends, and seeing Jenny my fiancée – that kind of stuff. I was really happy, it wasn't like I needed something to do. Maybe the computer just let me use my imagination, but it wasn't like I couldn't cope with reality and was trying to hide, that's what Jenny said it was...

"My job was boring and I used to get dead excited about going home to play the computer games. When Jen used to come round and talk to me, I just wouldn't hear what she was saying at all, because I was so engrossed in playing the games. She'd always go downstairs and chat with my mum, which used to cause loads of trouble. Things carried on like that for ages, then I started losing my mates and not bothering to go out and stuff. Jenny stayed with me until we had this massive row. She said she couldn't marry a bloke who didn't do anything but play games. She said that if I didn't snap out of it she'd leave me for good. I couldn't "snap out of it", it isn't like that, so she broke off our engagement."

It was only then that Mark realised how far things had gone.

"I just realised that my world had shrunk to the size of a TV screen and I'd lost all the things that were really important to me. I've tried to stop the games – if it hadn't been for them, I'd still have Jenny. It makes me so f****** angry to know that I wasted my future by playing games, and that's all they are, just games – it's very easy to forget that, and that's where the real problem lies."

After the break up, Jenny got work in Liverpool. Mark, in due course, is going to follow her – the games will be left at home.

EXPERT'S OPINION:

Zelda West-Meads (Counsellor and spokesperson, RELATE Marriage Guidance)

Which is the stronger love? The love between a man and a woman, or that between a man and his console?

"In marriage or a relationship if one partner (more often than not the man) lets video games take over his life, it does have a detrimental affect on the relationship. It tends, though, to be a symptom of deeper problems in the relationship, like loss of love, boredom or an escape from money problems, constant arguments or rows.

"It ends up as a way of avoiding communicating: like talking and listening to each other. Love, friendship and respect are all important ingredients in a good marriage. If these are undermined, it can have a devastating affect on any relationship. In Mark and Jenny's particular case, Mark failed to take notice of what Jenny was saying until it was too late, and it was this type of behaviour which drove them apart."

TOP TEN CASES FOR PROSECUTION

Video games:
1. Damage eyesight
2. Are violent, hence condone violence
3. Stop people socialising
4. Are a waste of huge amounts of money
5. Are addictive
6. Lure people from studying or working
7. Are sexist
8. Encourage a confrontational attitude
9. Cause RSI (repetitive strain injuries)
10. Erm, turn people into zombies?

CASE STUDY NO.2: BANKRUPTCY

Tim, now aged 33, first got a computer while he was working in France during his early twenties. On his return to England, Tim continued to play games.

"I bought an electrical shop in Birmingham, and lived in a flat above. That allowed me to play as much as I wanted during the day. I shouldn't have, but I thought the shop would get along."

Two to four hours a day of playing on his computer soon turned into "at least 15 hours a day", and Tim became "totally addicted to computers and computer games – my living room was choc-a-bloc with equipment".

Tim discovered too late that the business couldn't do without him, and it went bankrupt.

"I became unemployed and moved into my girlfriend's place on the other side of town. I didn't try to find another job, I had a chance, but didn't take it. I was playing video games all night and sleeping during the day. I lost weight from not eating – I wasn't eating because I was too busy on the computer. I also smoked too much. Looking back at myself then, I didn't even have a personality."

Tim practically became nocturnal, but did eventually get out of this rut and took on some work repairing fridges.

"It didn't make much difference. The money I earned was spent on games."

Tim's long-suffering girlfriend walked out on him at this point.

"Looking back on the situation, it was a jealousy thing. I don't blame her for feeling neglected and finally leaving me – I would have done the same thing if it had been the other way round."

Having lost his business and his girlfriend, Tim "woke up one day and just knew that it had all gotten too much" and sold all his equipment (worth well over £1000) through the newspaper for £250.

That was two years ago. Now Tim works in a school, but he won't use the computers: "The people at the school know I can use them, but now I just find them totally boring... I blame them totally for what happened, absolutely."

EXPERT'S OPINION:

Dr Margaret A Shotton (author of "Computer Addiction? A Study Of Computer Dependency")

"You cannot blame the computer. I don't have the full story and an interview would enable me to make a proper comment, but it's obvious that the computer was an escape from whatever problems Tim must have been facing at the time.

So you buy a computer to help you with your business. But what happens if all you do is play games?

"In a lot of cases I have come across people to whom the computer has been an escape and a god-send with no ill affects. Many people have benefited from playing computer games greatly. Often isolated, withdrawn people have benefited in a social context – intelligent school kids previously regarded as swats become playground gurus. As a trend, I've found that introverted people have increased their social circles through playing computer games, but I have never found that extroverted people became more withdrawn or isolated. Computer games have proven to be good therapy for all sorts of people.

"The desire to play them obsessively or 'getting hooked' comes back to control again. The 20th century imposes many restrictions on people – there are pressures to perform academically at school, college, or in the work place. People have very little control in their lives today – there is less freedom than in previous generations, and video games provide the perfect means for a person to gain control of their life. Tim obviously felt under a lot of pressure and the computer provided a welcome escape."

Turn over

CASE STUDY NO.3: TROUBLE AT SCHOOL

Dale is 12, and lives in Manchester. His older brother has had a computer for several years and so Dale was computer literate from an early age. Dale's mother, Anne, was originally happy with that situation.

"I thought it would be good for his education, increase his concentration span and help with his problem-solving skills, things like that."

The games which Dale was playing, however, were not designed for educational purposes.

"Those games are designed to make you excited, they make you want to play them again and again, the whole point is to kill the bad guys and win – if you don't, you're dead. Dale started taking these games very seriously, he got moody and aggressive and competitive, I'd noticed that."

When Dale's headmaster phoned and said he was sending Dale home for fighting, Anne was "angry and embarrassed – it was just dreadful".

Apparently, Dale's academic standards had fallen behind, he had become disruptive in class and argumentative in the playground.

"His headmaster suggested that Dale shouldn't spend so much time playing games, he said Dale should widen his interests... When we got home Dale told me why he'd started the fight – it was over some computer or something. I couldn't understand it, I didn't mind these games. I suppose I hadn't realised that Dale played them so much. When I thought he was out on his bike, he was at his friends playing computer games. His school work has been affected by this obsession and I don't know if he'll catch up. I've stopped him playing games so much at home, but he won't stop altogether. When I say that I think he should, he just shouts and throws a tantrum. Dale's definitely addicted. I'm not sure where to begin to change that. His hobby has just gone too far."

Schools usually *encourage* computer literacy, but then computers get the blame when academic results fall...

EXPERT'S OPINION:

Dr Dorothy Rowe (Psychological Analyst) last month Dr Rowe told us that:

"When something is described as 'addictive' it simply means that someone returns to something time and time again, so yes – using an exact definition, playing video games could be described as addictive. But it's not the games that are the problem. The real problem is what's pushing people to play them. Video games actually have no 'addiction-inducing' properties in themselves."

TOP TEN CASES FOR DEFENCE

Video games:
1. Improve hand/eye co-ordination
2. Are no worse for eyesight than TV
3. Create a forum for socialising
4. Test players' powers of lateral thinking
5. Test players' short-term memory
6. Develop players' peripheral vision
7. Train reflexes
8. Encourages computer literacy
9. Discourage violence: players' physical size or strength is unimportant
10. Encourage and develop concentration

So to say that Dale is "addicted" to video games isn't true – he just finds himself drawn to the escape which video games offer?

"A lot of research shows that (traditionally) boys become compulsive video game players for the same reasons that (traditionally) girls become anorexic. Teenagers often feel that they are not in control of any aspect of their lives; video games offer this control. In a lot of ways it's a similar process to the way in which eating can be controlled, hence some people take this control to extremes and become anorexic."

CASE STUDY NO.4: STEALING

James, aged 14, lives in Walsall. He got a computer for his 13th birthday and was immediately "hooked", according to his mother, Jill.

"He used to come home from school with about four or five friends, they'd play all evening until bedtime. James wouldn't come down for tea or anything. There was nothing I could do to stop them playing."

Once, Jill got so frustrated that she literally pulled the plug on the computer and in return got a barrage of verbal abuse.

"He was a different person, he didn't go out to play sport, he didn't read books, he didn't see girls, he saw no-one except the friends he played on computers with... James is a lovely boy, but he suddenly became introverted and aggressive."

The problem really began, however, when money started going missing from Jill's purse.

"It was only the odd five pounds at first, and I didn't think too much about it, but it got to be more and more. I'd always said to James that I wouldn't buy him games, they're way too expensive. He used to swap them with friends, but you know what boys this age are like, they always want to be best."

Jill became convinced that James was taking the money. When she confronted him, however, he became aggressive.

"He turned on me and shouted that it was my fault, because I wouldn't buy him games. My first reaction was to throw that computer away – it's like a drug. You hear of people stealing money in order to buy drugs, because they *need* them. Well, James *needed* those computer games...

"It was very difficult at first, because I felt responsible. Now James understands; he plays for two hours a night and stops when I ask him to. I buy him games occasionally. I'd rather that than him stealing, and I think we're now getting over it. I couldn't believe a son of mine would do this for computers and I don't think he could quite believe it either – he was as scared as I was when he realised how far things had gone. I'd like to see these 'games' banned."

EXPERT'S OPINION:

Kate Webster (Lecturer in child psychology and development)

"I don't believe that video games were the cause of the problem, but simply that they were allowed to become the focus of an already existing situation. Problems of conflict between adolescents and their parents are not uncommon. Young people are beginning to want to take control of their own lives and therefore challenge their parents' values and beliefs in many ways. There is also the fact (described by Freud as the 'pleasure principle') that most people prefer doing things which they enjoy rather than things that they perceive as hard work.

"Some people find socialising difficult and prefer to be alone or do something else at a gathering rather than talking to people. At most parties of middle-aged people there are those who prefer to be busy with the drinks or in the kitchen washing up than in the midst of the action. The same is true of many teenagers."

Dr Margaret A Shotton (author of "Computer Addiction? A Study Of Computer Dependency")

"Parents don't understand that stopping a kid playing video games often means that you have to start from the beginning. This is one of the main causes of arguments for which the video game gets the blame. It's a parent's responsibility to limit the time the child spends on any one activity (no matter what it is), but it's also a good idea for the parents to actually have a go at playing the games themselves. As for the stealing, more often than not it is often merely a form of attention seeking."

BIG BUSINESS EXPLOITATION?

OK, so what do the games' manufacturers have to say about the harmful effects their games are possibly having on gamesplayers? A lot of people are making a lot of money out of video games: have the people in the business done any research into the possible harm they might be doing? We didn't ask them if they cared (cue: three tons of sincere, marketing cobblers along the lines of "hey, without the gamesplayers, we're nothing" wibble), but wanted to know if they'd actually taken time out to research the point in question.

Here's the response we got from two of the biggest games producers in the business...

CASE STUDY NO.5: DAMAGED EYESIGHT

Jonathon is 12 years old and lives in Cambridge. He had been playing computer games for a couple of years when his mother Beverley began to worry about his eyesight.

"Jonathon had developed odd eye movements. He had started rolling his eyes upwards and jerking his head in a peculiar way. We took him to see Dr Arnold Wilkins (a leading researcher in applied psychology at Cambridge) and were told that Jonathon was susceptible to flicker frequency, which causes certain rhythms in the brain depending on the speed at which computer games flicker."

Research is being done to establish a possible link between this susceptibility to flicker and epilepsy.

"The symptoms Jonathon had were mild spells of pre-epileptic behaviour and we were told that it's possible that he may become epileptic."

Jonathon has suffered no permanent damage and still plays on his computer for up to three hours a day. When he does, however, he has to wear specially tinted glasses that lessen the affect of flicker on his eyesight. Beverley believes that computer games can be addictive and wants to make parents more aware of the possible dangers that playing them too often can cause.

"I think that all computers should have a warning on them saying that they can cause eye problems and even epilepsy if they are played by someone who is sensitive to flickering."

Unfortunately, there's no way of knowing in advance if you or one of your children is susceptible to flicker frequency.

"Also, we've been told that on some games there may be a danger of developing RSI (Repetitive Strain Injury) because of the movement of the fingers on the control pad, but that's a different matter. Permanent damage could have been caused to Jonathon and other children like him, and I think that parents have the right to know if these video games really are a danger to people's health."

Jonathon now staggers his playing time throughout the day. Not only does this mean that he doesn't actually play so much, but it also means he isn't continually staring at the screen.

EXPERT'S OPINION:

Dr Arnold Wilkins (Applied Psychologist, Cambridge University)

"Only a small proportion of people are affected by flicker, but exactly how many it's difficult to say, because some are more affected than others. Some people suffer epileptic fits as a result of flicker, but fortunately this only amounts to one in about 10,000 people."

That roughly equates to a minute 0.05% of the population who could suffer from this condition. But is flicker sensitivity confined only to video game players?

"No, people get exactly the same effect from watching TV. The only added problem with video games is that people tend to sit up close for longer periods of time. It's best to sit at least three screen widths away from the monitor (so smaller screens are generally best) and regulate playing hours. It's also a good idea to put a dark nylon screen or mesh in front of the video screen (as opposed to simply turning down the brightness) as this helps by reducing the brightness without making the picture more difficult to see.

"Generally, just trust your body. If you start to feel pain between the eyes or dizziness, then give yourself a rest. But if you are one of the few people who are sensitive to flicker, a seizure (an epileptic fit) could happen without warning. One sign indicating that a child may well be sensitive to flicker is if they feel 'drawn' to the TV set. If they enjoy walking right up close to the set (even to the extent of placing their noses on the screen), then it's a sign that they may well be flicker sensitive, and this behaviour could well lead to a seizure.

"So sit a good distance from the TV screen, don't play for prolonged periods at a time and maybe invest in a screen guard – and take action if your eyes or head starts to ache."

Sega themselves actually acknowledge this problem. Take a look on page 2 of *Sonic 2's* instruction manual and you'll find a warning. But then, how many of us actually bother reading a manual before getting stuck into a game? I should imagine that the number of us who actually read this warning before starting play could be counted on Tails', erm, tails – this kind of reduces the warning's effectiveness a tad. But at least Sega have made the effort.

SO, ARE WE ALL IN DANGER?

No, not at all. In none of our case studies (stories that on the surface could understandably lead to the conclusion by some people that video games are harmful) is there one piece of hard evidence that would suggest that playing video games is in any way more likely to knacker your life or turn you into a zombie than watching TV.

The case of Jonathon, who found himself suffering from sensitivity to flickering is a genuine problem, but one that affects so few people that it's nothing for the majority of us to worry about.

Video games are an escape from a problem, not a problem in themselves. Marriages have been known to fail because a man spends his whole time with his car or with a model railway kit – yet no-one's ever seriously claimed that model railway kits are addictive and should be banned. People pick on video games and computers, because they don't fully understand how they work or even what they are.

Computer games *can* affect people sensitive to flicker, but it's certainly no worse than watching TV...

So to conclude, don't worry. If you find yourself "addicted" to video games to the extent that you're worried your health may be suffering, then give it a rest. Get some fresh air, treat your body with the respect it deserves and take a long hard look at your life – don't just blame your console.

Video games are relaxing, entertaining and downright good fun to millions of people around the world – if you treat them as such, then you've got absolutely nothing to worry about. And that's official. Ⓜ

SEGA

NICK ALEXANDER

"We haven't commissioned any research into this area ourselves, but then again we're not aware of any hard evidence that video games are in any way harmful. Most psychologists don't think that this is an issue and the overwhelming expert opinion is that there's nothing to worry about – so it seems pointless to spend a lot of time investigating it.

"I do think it's important for parents to regulate the number of hours during which their children play video games, just as they'd want to regulate the time they spend watching TV or anything else. The nature of young people's minds being as it is, kids tend to get heavily into one interest and then heavily into another. It's something parents should keep an eye on, but not worry about excessively."

So, when we read stories of people whose "lives have been ruined by video games" and when people who describe themselves as "video game junkies" appear on TV shows, your conscience is completely clear?

"It would be irresponsible of us to wash our hands entirely, but we're confident that there's no evidence to indicate that video games are harmful."

ELECTRONIC ARTS

SIMON JEFFREY

"Any growth industry has to endure a phase of media backlash. Someone wants to make a name for him/herself, and the easiest way to do it is to shout out loud that the latest craze is bad for kids. It happened with video, it happened with skateboards, it even happened with Rock 'n' Roll in the 1950s...

"EA spends a great deal of time researching its products, and if we believed that any were genuinely harmful in any way, they would not reach the shops. Our move towards 'Edutainment' software (software that educates while it entertains) illustrates EA's commitment to education as well as entertainment through the medium of the microprocessor.

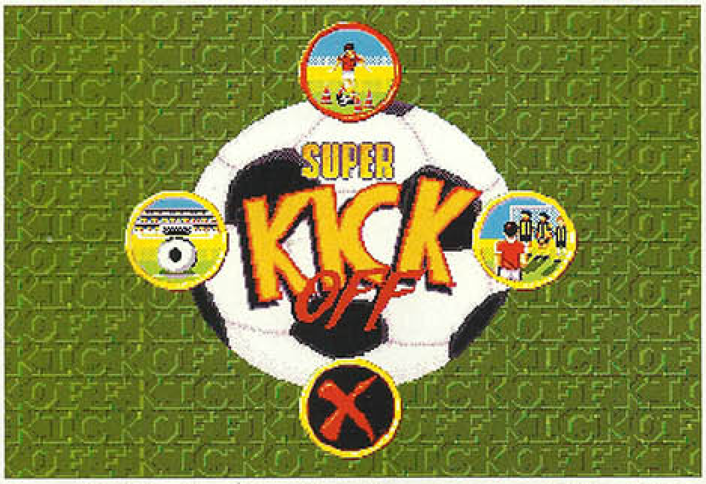
"I could spout on for hours about the social interaction that computer gaming gives rise to, about how it enables the social pariahs of old to become playground heroes ahead of their soccer-playing peers, about how it enables sick children to develop reflexes and participate in levels of socialising that their handicap would otherwise preclude them from etc. etc., but you don't have the space for all that, do you?"

Fair point.

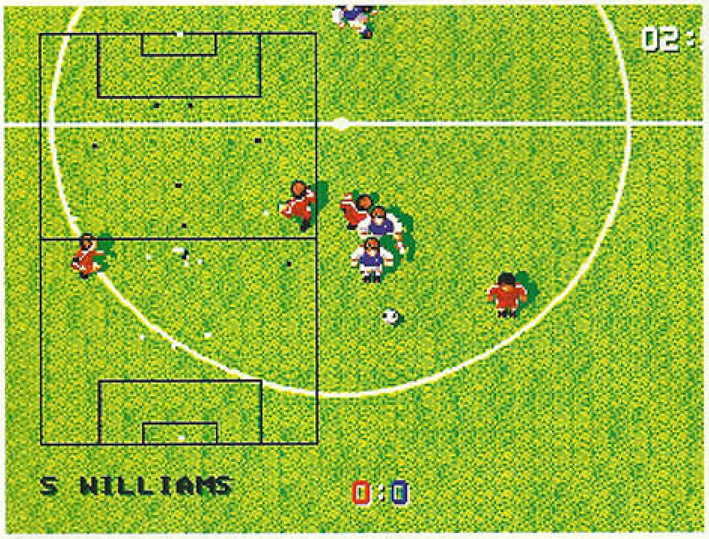
Andy Dyer's been committed to a hospital for the criminally insane. He tried to plug half a pound of Maris Pipers into his Mega Drive and has not been the same since. Still, he finished the previews before he went

SUPER KICK-OFF

US Gold • April



Here are the jolly old practice options. You can hone your dribbling abilities, polish up your penalty shoot outs, or simply wander around the pitch a bit

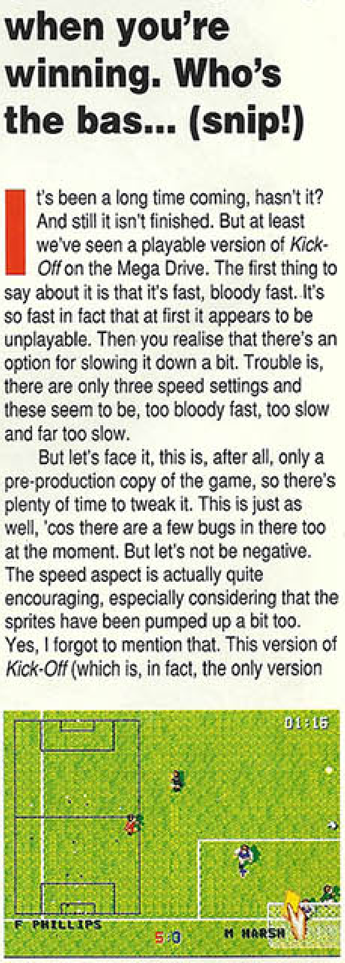


No sooner do the teams kick off, than all the players decide to form into a confusing clump, making it hard to tell exactly what's happening

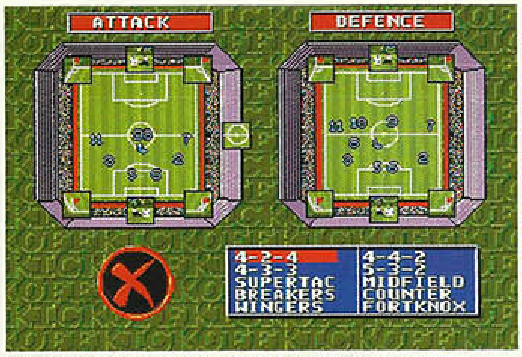
Here we go, here we go, here we go! You only sing when you're winning. Who's the bas... (snip!)

It's been a long time coming, hasn't it? And still it isn't finished. But at least we've seen a playable version of *Kick-Off* on the Mega Drive. The first thing to say about it is that it's fast, bloody fast. It's so fast in fact that at first it appears to be unplayable. Then you realise that there's an option for slowing it down a bit. Trouble is, there are only three speed settings and these seem to be, too bloody fast, too slow and far too slow.

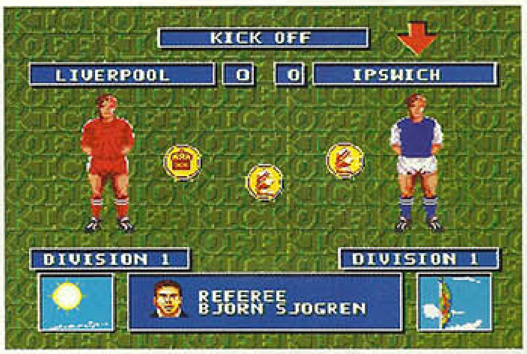
But let's face it, this is, after all, only a pre-production copy of the game, so there's plenty of time to tweak it. This is just as well, 'cos there are a few bugs in there too at the moment. But let's not be negative. The speed aspect is actually quite encouraging, especially considering that the sprites have been pumped up a bit too. Yes, I forgot to mention that. This version of *Kick-Off* (which is, in fact, the only version



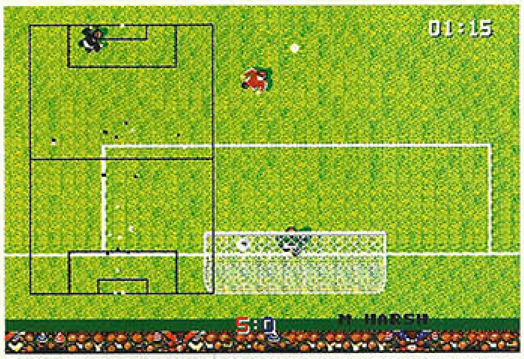
The ref for the match is Mr Magoo, and he's currently booking no-one



Both teams can change their formation – incredibly useful if you actually know what you're doing



This screen tells us a lot. Ipswich wins the toss, the ref is Swedish, it'll be sunny, and it's the Queen's birthday



A blistering goal from M Marsh (I think). Other than that, there's really not much to say about this one

You can't actually see what's happening here, but when a goal's scored, it gets replayed in slow motion. Fab!

to have had this done) has been graphically enhanced. The scenery and options are really no more useful, functional or pretty than any other incarnation, but the sprites are chunkier, more detailed and more fluidly animated than before. Hurrah!

For those of you who have been buried deep beneath the earth for the past few years, *Kick-Off* is possibly the most brilliant football sim ever created. There have been legions of imitators and competitors who have all tried to better the formula, but it's never really come off. We've seen versions of *Kick-Off* on the Amiga, ST, C64, Spectrum, Master System, SNES, NES, Game Boy, in fact, it's been on practically every available system. But now, at last, it's on the Mega Drive, courtesy of US Gold.

This game is detailed and fluidly animated

The range of play options available is pretty wide. From the start of the game you can (take a deep breath now) play a single game, play one of four tournaments, play on your own, play against a friend, play with a friend against the computer, watch the computer play itself, change formation, change the speed of play, choose the time played at each end, toggle the extra time and red cards, change the pitch surface, change the size of the pitch scanner, edit the teams, and practise dribbling and penalty shoot outs. And that little list doesn't even include the features that US Gold haven't put in yet.

If all goes according to plan, US Gold should have the game out on the streets very soon indeed, but we'll be bringing you the full review in our very next issue, so stick with us. We're as keen as you are to see what the end product will be like.

FULL TIME
LIVERPOOL
6
0
IPSWICH
DIVISION 1
DIVISION 1
REFEREE
BJORN SJOGREN

Still sunny, still Queeny's birthday, but Liverpool have won 6 – 1

THREE FOOTBALLY-TYPE PICCIES

If there's anyone, *anyone* out there who doesn't know what football is all about, here are three of the more commonplace occurrences in any one match. There's a throw in (where someone "throws" the ball "in"), a corner (where someone kicks the ball from the "corner") and er, a penalty.

01:01
TIERTEX
4:0
M MARSH

A throw-in: If the other team kicks the ball out, you throw it back in

01:45
ANCO
TIERTEX
2:0
M MARSH

A corner: If you're awarded one, kick the ball, then score a goal. Simple!

If someone assaults you in the penalty area, you get a shot at goal

UP 'N' COMING...

Here they are, all the games which you can expect to see released for the Mega Drive over the next few months. Most of them will come out on schedule, but some, of course, will not see the light of their expected release day (well, month in these cases). Don't therefore take what follows as gospel, but do see if there's anything which, in your opinion, is worth waiting for, and then cross your fingers in the hope that you won't have to keep them crossed for the next six months.

There's also a whole host of other stuff which we know will arrive eventually but when we're not quite sure yet. Basically, as each month goes by we'll update our list so that you'll know as soon as possible when to expect all the best import and official titles.

FEBRUARY

James Bond The Duel – Domark
Not fab, but there're a few nice touches in this one. *And* it contains all the best characters from the films.

Double Dragon 3 – Flying Edge
Let's hope this one's nothing like *Double Dragon*. At least one things for sure, it can't be any worse.

Sunset Riders – Konami
An ancient coin-op, but the chance to play bounty-hunting Wild-West cowboys has got to be good.

Toxic Crusaders – Sega
The (in)famous *Tromaville* characters battle against the forces of pollution once again.

Outlander – Mindscape
It's post-holocaust time again and you've got to save (what's left of) the world.

Championship Pro Am – Tradewest
These guys are just starting out on the Mega Drive, but this racer should be a laugh.

André Agassi Tennis – Tecmagik
A tennis sim in which you have to win Wimbledon, get carried away and leave yer girlie for Barbara Streisand.

Rise Of The Dragon (CD) – Sega
Mmm, not really sure about this one, but we'll try to get hold of it for our very next issue.

Battle Toads – Tradewest
A platform shoot-'em-up and beat-'em-up all rolled into one. Don't despair though, it's fab on the SNES.

Pro Quarterback – Tradewest
Yes, it's American football time again. Wonder what the programmers can do that's new this time round?

MARCH

Mohammed Ali's Boxing – Virgin
A 3D view of the ring and 360 degrees rotation around it might make this the world's only good boxing game.

Mega Lo Mania – Virgin
Teach your people to fight, make weapons and (best of all) make babies in this world domination simulation.

Another World – Virgin
Incredible animation and puzzle-solving action make a pleasant change from the usual Mega Drive stuff.

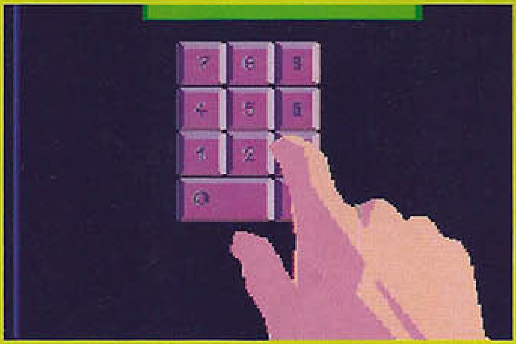
Mic and Mac – Virgin
Get all eco-conscious and save the rain-forests in this two-payer platform game.

Superman – Virgin
Superman doesn't normally take any stick, except when someone's holding a piece of Kryptonite to his face.

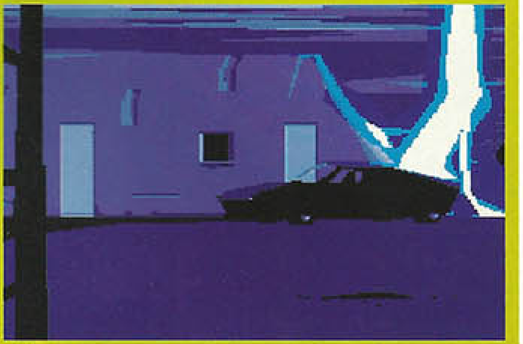
ANOTHER WORLD

Virgin • March

Professor Lester accelerates one particle too many, and gets into an other-worldy pickle



On approaching his lab, the professor inadvertently tots up his weekly grocery bill on the numeric keypad...



This Sainsbury's-related faux pas gives rise to an horrendous thunder storm. Funny business, isn't it?

Gone are the days of console games simply being console games and home computer games being simply for the home computer. There are an ever-growing number of titles that appear on various formats, and this is one of them. *Another World* originally appeared on the PC and has since graced the Super NES before skipping gaily over to the Mega Drive.

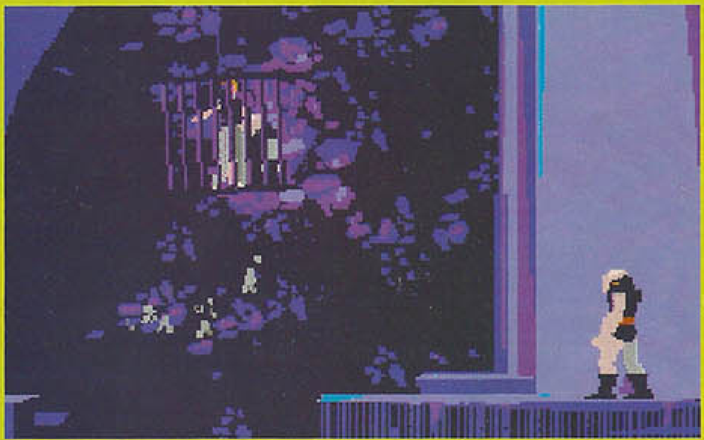
Graphically, it's a bit of a treat this one, because the visuals are all created with filled polygons rather than sprites. Normally these polygons would be used to create 3D shapes in flight sims, but in this case they've been used in only two dimensions to make up scenery and various characters. This means that it has a cinematic feel about it with fluid animation in the game itself and gorgeous inbetweeny scenes throughout.

Graphically, it's a bit of a treat

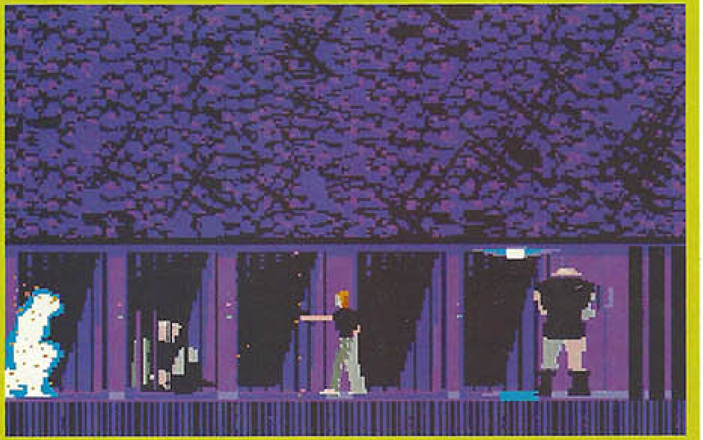
You play the part of a professor called Lester who's been knobbing around with particle accelerators and accidentally transports himself into, yes you guessed it, another world. All he has to help him escape are his wits... oh, and a gun, which he finds on the floor. Mmm, and a friend he picks up along the way, but that's it. The rest is up to you.

If any of you have seen *Prince Of Persia,* you'll know roughly what to expect. The simple walk-jump-and-avoid-things gameplay is very similar, except in this game the puzzles are a little more varied. There are also plenty of opportunities to test your reflexes when you get bombarded by hordes of other-worldy scum. For example, whereas in *Prince Of Persia* you'd wander around relatively empty areas meeting only the occasional adversary, there are a number of enemies in this game that need dealing with in very different ways.

There are no levels as such in the game, because it's like one long movie. The game is, however, split up into sections, each of which is given a password. When you complete a section, the password is displayed and you don't have to go back ever again. This is a good thing really, because you get only one life and no energy bar whatsoever. This means that each section must be played over and over enabling you to learn a bit more each time. Eventually, you'll be able to get right through the section without getting blatted once. Hurrah! *Another World* is looking really rather fab, so we'll look forward to bringing you the full review next issue.



This is you, in a cage. And the only way you're going to escape is to swing the blighter until it breaks free of its chain and squashes that guard. Ha!

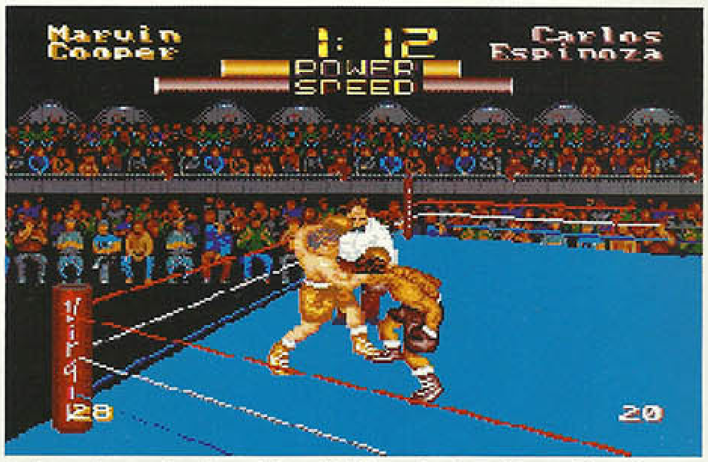


Lester kills one of the enemy guards while his new-found friend takes a wee up against the control panel which activates the door. Hmm...

MUHAMMAD ALI BOXING

Virgin • March

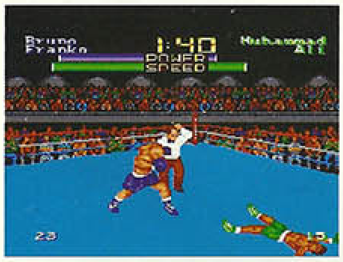
Muhammed Ali is back. He can barely walk or talk let alone box, so this is, in a way, a tribute to a has-been



Carlos makes a close inspection of Mr Cooper's glove, then realises his mistake when his nose decides to separate into several thousand fragments

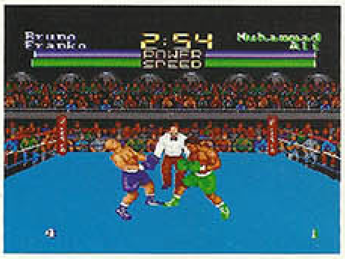
He floats like a butterfly, stings like a bee, hobbles on his zimmer frame, it's sad old git Ali. Yes, just when you thought you'd seen the last of that old punch-drunk poop, he crops up in his own bloody boxing game on the Mega Drive. Ah well, it's only been several years since his last fight (or coherent sentence), so we'll give him the benefit of the doubt, shall we?

The game features a 3D(ish) boxing ring, which actually rotates as the boxers shuffle around trying to knock the crap out of each other. This makes it rather different to the more common side-on or behind-the-boxer views seen in most other boxing games. From what we've seen so far this seems to work quite well visually, but as to how it will affect the gameplay, well, we don't really know yet.



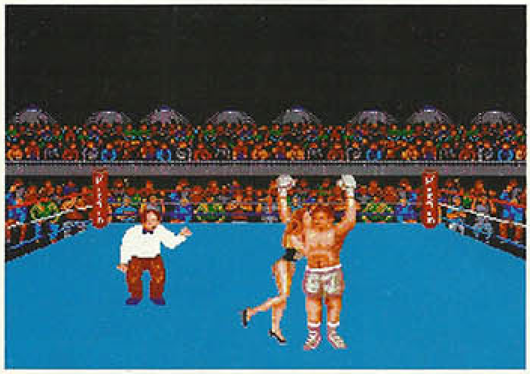
Ali's only as good as the blokey controlling him. It's Andy – 'nuff said!

There are ten imaginary boxers to choose from as well as Ali himself, and they all have very different abilities, strengths and weaknesses. As well as this, there are two different play options to choose from. You can either play the game arcade-style or simulation-style. The arcade option means you simply have to concentrate on attacking, defending and scuttling around the ring – in fact it's just frantic button-bashing for the hard of thinking. However, if you choose simulation mode, you'll need to get your head around a whole range of moves like uppercuts, left hooks and ducking manoeuvres.

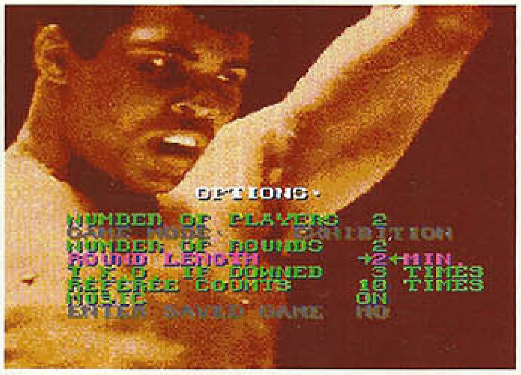


Ali's in fine form. By treading on his opponents toes, he wins the bout

Could it be that *Muhammed Ali Boxing* will be the best boxing sim ever to appear on the Mega Drive? We're saying nothing… until next issue of course. But one thing's for sure. It can't be any worse than that god-awful game called *James "Buster" Douglas Boxing*. Next month boxing fans…



Win a bout and some lithe young filly comes into the ring and snogs you. Not very '90s, but pleasant nevertheless



```
OPTIONS
NUMBER OF PLAYERS      2
GAME MODE          EXHIBITION
NUMBER OF ROUNDS       2
ROUND LENGTH          →2←MIN.
T.K.O IF DOWNED        3  TIMES
REFEREE COUNTS        10  TIMES
MUSIC                 ON
ENTER SAVED GAME      NO
```

The options screen contains a big piccie of Ali himself. It also lets you choose opponents, rounds etc. Lovely!

UP 'N' COMING…

International Rugby Simulator – Domark
The rugby world cup went down a storm on telly last year, so there should be a bit of interest in this game.

Microcosm – Psygnosis
We previewed this in the last issue of MEGA so we'll hopefully be able to review the first British Mega CD stuff next ish.

Dracula – Psygnosis
Another British Mega CD title. It's based on the film that is in turn based on the classic novel.

Tiny Toon Adventures – Konami
The Tiny Toons are the toddlers of the Looney Toons world. It's a cartoon platform romp and should be brill.

Sherlock Holmes Consulting Detective (CD) – Sega
If it's anything like the excellent board game, then this should be pretty damn hot.

APRIL

Tony La Russa Baseball – EA
Yet another bloody baseball sim, but if anyone can do a good sport game, it's EA.

Mutant Football – EA
Bored of spot-on, highly realistic sport sims, it looks like EA have decided to get a bit weird on us. Mutant football indeed!

Paperboy 2 – Domark
I've never liked this game; it was crap in the arcades and will probably be crap here too.

MAY

Mig 29 – Domark
Who says the Mega Drive can't handle flight sims? Oh, it was you at the back was it? Well, you were wrong.

COMING SOON(ISH)…

Terminator (CD) – Virgin
Will this one use the Mega CD's capabilities to the full, or will it be another platform bore?

F19 – Microprose
A flight sim from the masters of flight sims. And it has an F19 jet fighter in it.

F15 Strike Eagle 2 – Microprose
More airborne simulation from Microprose, only this time it's an F15 in the starring role.

Wing Commander (CD) – Sierra
THE big PC game makes it over to the Mega CD and should be even better than before.

Zombie High – Electronic Arts
Told you EA had gone weird on us. Surely not a high school simulator with zombies in it?

Seven Cities of Gold – Electronic Arts
We don't have a clue what this one will be, but no doubt some sort of RPG is on the cards.

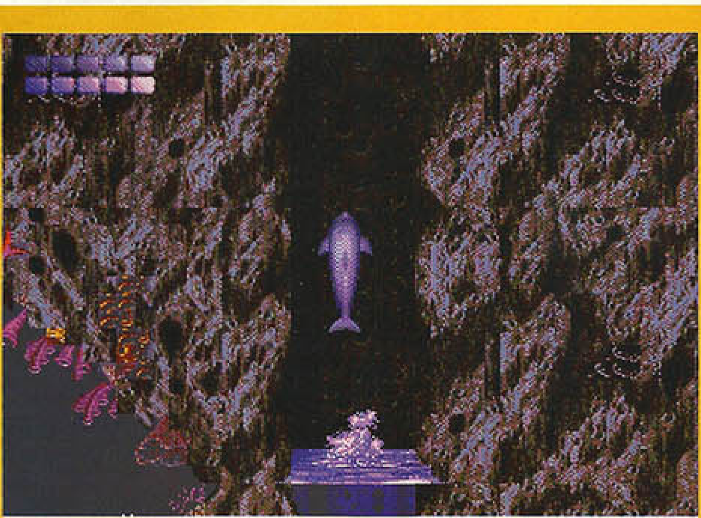
Jester – Sega
Dress up in tights and shout "Hey nonny, the rain it raineth every day!" at passing monarchs.

Dinosaurs for Hire – Sega
Rent-a-bronto sounds rather unlikely doesn't it? Can't wait to see what this is all about.

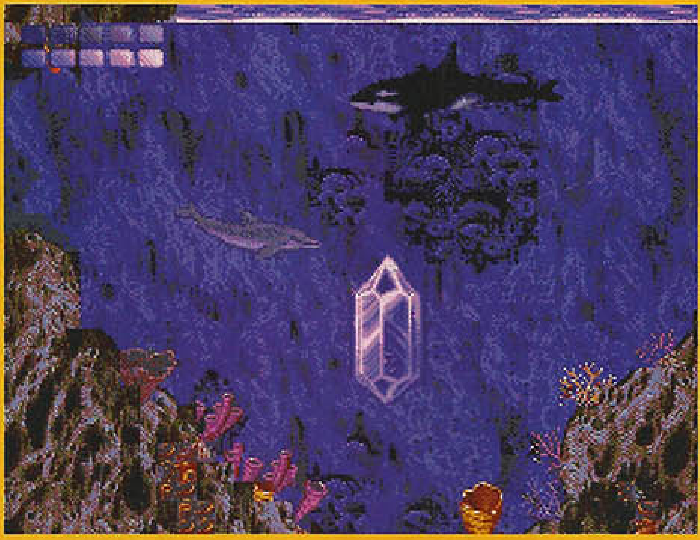
Road Riot 4WD – Tengen
Get in your four-wheel buggy, get on the road and give them hell.

Gauntlet – Tengen
With the four-player adaptor being worked on, this maze/arcade game should be a real cracker.

Cal Ripkin Baseball – Mindscape
Baseball is becoming really popular on the Mega Drive lately. Let's hope this has something new to offer.



This is me (as Ecco of course) leaping vertically upwards in order to explore an entirely empty cavern. It may not look very exciting here, but see it moving on screen and you'll definitely think otherwise



Use your sonar on that killer whale and you'll get a cryptic message from him. Work out exactly what the message means and you'll be able to finish this particular level more easily

ECCO

Sega • March

Flipper was never like this. For a start, it was crap and featured a sickly kid. This isn't and, er, doesn't

Do you remember last year (or was it the year before) when there was a sudden mad panic about our environment and the state the planet was in? Suddenly, all the right-on people out there started buying pump action deodorant, topping up their cars with unleaded petrol and using that environmentally friendly bog-paper that felt like it must surely have consisted solely of recycled sandpaper. Presumably this planet-saving trend has continued, but we don't really hear much about it these days, do we? Whatever happened to David Icke? But anyway, my point is this, the only "cause" which has always touched peoples hearts is the plight of those, if not cuddly, then extremely cute, dolphins.

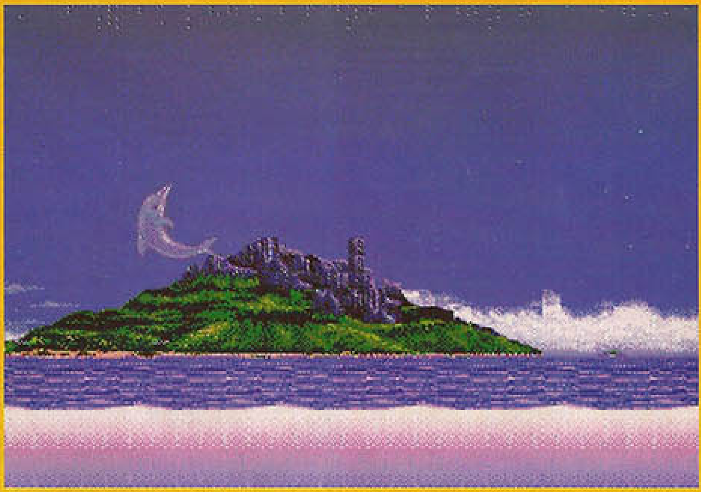
And so *Ecco*, Sega's latest "gem" must surely be a winner, yes? Well, yes, but not just because the main character's a dolphin. If, when we've seen the rest of this game, we find that it's as challenging and as playable as it is in the early stages, then this could turn out to be not only the surprise hit of the year, but also one of the best video games ever. It's already received rave reviews from a couple of other mags out there, but as we don't usually take any notice of what they say, we decided to trogg off to Sega and see the blighter for ourselves.

Sure enough, at first sight, it looked stunning. The graphics are, well, amazing. Not only are the backdrops beautifully drawn conjuring up all the beauty and atmosphere of the deep sea, but the animation on the sprites is also incredible.

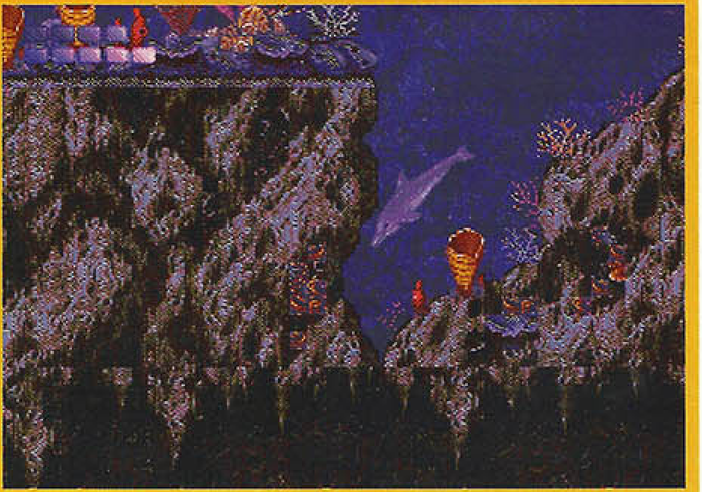
"Hello, are you a girlie?" "Er, not sure." It's not easy being a dolphin

The plot is fairly simple; Ecco is a dolphin who witnesses a mysterious vortex, which sucks all the sea life out of the water. It's then up to him (or her?) to solve the mystery of the vortex. Controlling the dolphin is very intuitive and after only a few minutes you'll have mastered high-speed swimming and spectacular leaps out of the water. By exploring, you can find a few friends who, once you've spoken to them with your sonar, will give you cryptic clues as to how to complete the level. The levels we saw were huge, and if the rumours of 27 of them are true, then this will be one helluva challenging game.

The MEGA team was totally awe-struck by this game and its gentle relaxing (almost hypnotic) gameplay. We can't wait to get our hands on it properly and review it for you lot.



By using the speed-up button and heading for the surface, you can perform graceful somersaults like this. Not overly useful, but still quite pretty

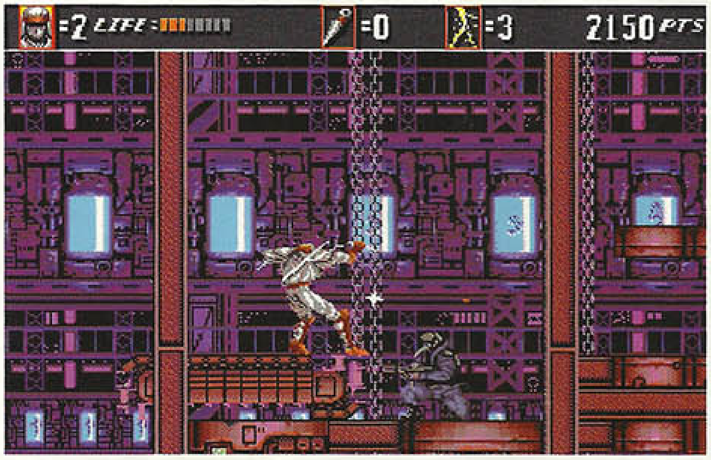


Exploring the depths is all very well, but even a dolphin needs fresh air. Check your air meter (top left) and return to the surface to breathe

SHINOBI 3 RETURN OF THE NINJA MASTER

Sega • March

Joe Mushashi's ditched the dog and gone it alone for his third violent adventure

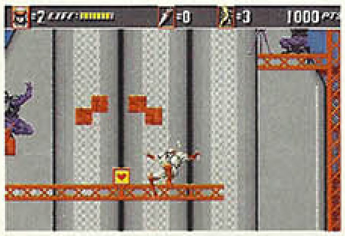


This is *Shinobi 3*, and at this point in the game you are using the "float awkwardly in mid-air" manoeuvre. Tromp that ninja with the gun

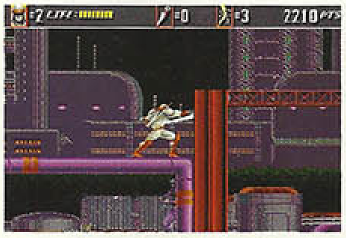
He's back, and this time he's bringing his shurikens. Oh, and a sword and, of course, a few other oriental-type widgets. Our old friend Derek Shinobi (but for some reason he doesn't ever use his christian name) has returned for the third in a series of Mega Drive games. The first was of course *Revenge Of Shinobi*, so called because it followed *Shinobi* on the Master System, followed by *Shadow Dancer* in which Derek was forced to take his dog with him, because the RSPCA was getting a bit heavy about him leaving Tiddles in the house all the time.

This third adventure follows pretty much the same formula, and, indeed, the main character, apart from being a bit better looking, can still swing swords, throw shurikens and perform stunning double leaps in the same way as before. The magical abilities are still in there too, although again it's all been tarted up somewhat. In fact, this could be described as a super-charged follow-up to the previous efforts. If you liked the gameplay of the previous games, then this is going to be right up your street, especially when you see the improved quality of the visuals.

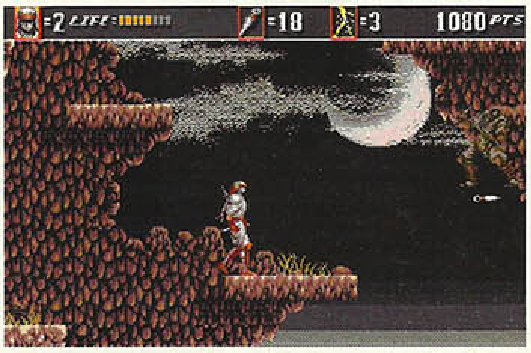
But before we get you all too lathered up, we would stress that the version we saw was still very unfinished, with enemies walking in mid air and so on. At this stage it does indeed look very slick, with its improved graphics, and it looks like the gameplay hasn't suffered at all either, but those final stages of development are all important and could make or break a game. No matter, we'll get our hands on a reviewable copy of *Shinobi 3* as soon as we can, and with any luck this should turn out to be a more than worthy successor to *Shadow Dancer* and *Revenge of Shinobi*.



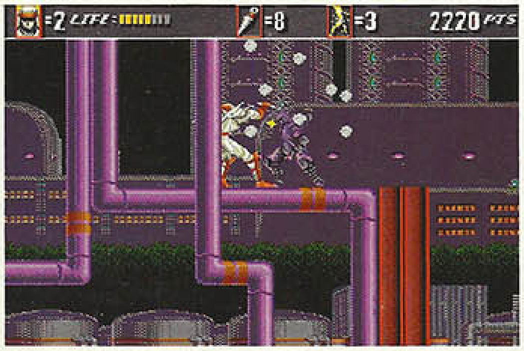
Bash the crates and Joe receives a power-up – in this case, extra energy



Mmm... Joe gets a bit attack-happy and swings for an iron girder. Ouch!



A gloriously moonlit night still isn't enough to highlight that sneaky old ninja hiding in the rockface on the right



Joe and his ninja pal Desmond do the mystic dance of the nine blobs. At least I think that's what they're doing

COMING SOON(ISH)...

Chessmaster – Mindscape
It's chess, it's on the Mega Drive and now wake up at the back.

Chester Cheetah – Kaneko
This game is looking very weird. Guide Chester in search of his fave brand of crisps.

Hook (CD) – Sony
Hopefully this CD game'll feature stills and animation from the film. The game might be crap though.

Sewer Shark (CD) – Sony
Screenshots from the film look stunning. The game is your average shoot-'em-up though.

Flintstones
Fred's off on his travels again, with only his trusty club to fend off attackers.

Romance Of The Three Kingdoms 2 – Koei
Try to take control of China in this heavy, RPG adventure.

Breach – Treco
Another strategy game, this time set in the future of ultra-modern warships.

Sorcerer's Kingdom – Treco
More strategy action from these guys, this time it's all cute and fluffy – just what we need.

Metal Fang – JVC
A decent overhead racing game that gives you wicked power-ups. Er, that's it!

Keeper Of the Gates – Razorsoft
Gory platform action and it is in fact the sequel to *Stormlord*. Exciting stuff huh?

Monopoly – Parker Brothers
Right, I'll buy Mayfair and a hotel. Rivetting stuff this Monopoly, eh?

Uncharted Waters – Koei
It's marine simulation time. Keep your family business above water (ha) and honour your family name.

Ninja Gaiden – Sega
This ninja game has been on loads of formats and now makes its way over to the Mega Drive.

Drive Junkers High – Sims
Take *Chase HQ*, add 400 years of car evolution, add some power ups, and go for it.

Land Stalker – Sega
You can buy this now on Jap import, but you can't understand a word. Wait for the official or US release.

Dark Wizard (CD)
Another CD RPG, with some astounding music and a very long intro sequence featuring real actors.

Power Wrestler (Deadly Moves – USA) – Kaneko
A one-on-one beat-'em-up which could be good. But is it really up to *Streetfighter 2?*

G-LOC – Sega
This coin-op is getting on in years, but the game might still be good for a laugh.

The Secret of Monkey Island (CD) – Victor/JVC
A classic RPG on both the Amiga and the PC. The CD version should be really good.

American Gladiators – GameTek
More joypad-bashing and finger-swelling action tied into the cult American TV show.

Hook – Sony Imagesoft
The cart version of this game won't be as nice as the CD game, but it's not looking too bad.

King's Quest 5 (CD) – Sierra
Help King Graham fight the forces of evil. Nice looking and very atmospheric.

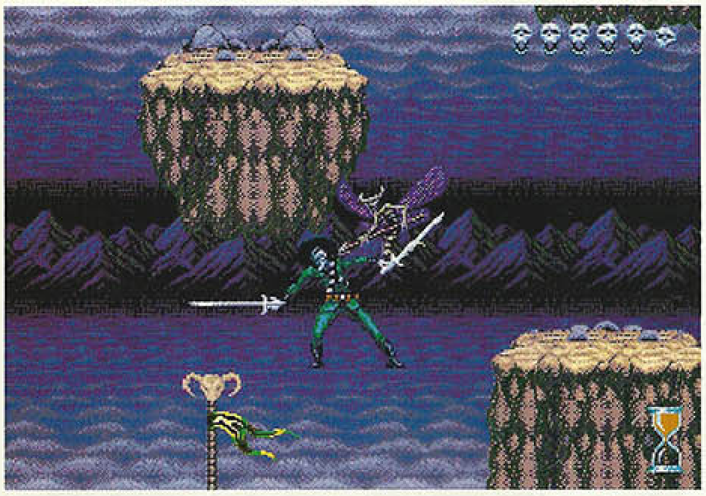
The Third World War (CD) – Bignet
Fancy trying to stop WWIII? Well check out this very intense strategy game then.

Trouble Shooter – Vic Tokai
The same game as *Battle Mania*, but slightly tweaked for the American market.

CHAKAN

Sega • March

Chakan is immortal, and the only way he's gonna ever live a normal life is to appear in a new Sega game

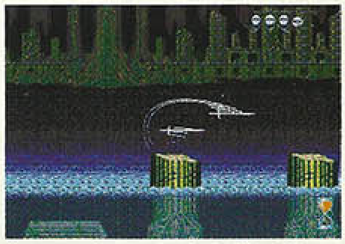


Whenever he gets hit by an enemy, Chakan makes like a black and white minstrel and bursts into a frightening rendition of that old classic "Mammy"

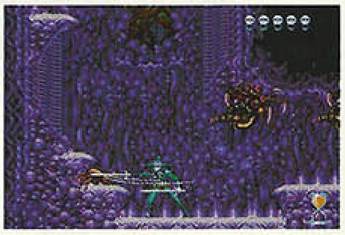
Chakan The Forever Man, or Forever as he's known to his friends, is immortal. According to the plot, he fought a duel with death and won. The trouble is, even though he's now endowed with eternal life, he's been stripped of his former powers and left to roam a land filled with dark supernatural horrors until the day he can vanquish the deniz... Oh cack! Is anyone really interested in all this guff? No, I thought not. Basically what we have here is a platformer based on a comic book series.

Chakan has two huge swords with which to fight off enemies, and he can also collect potions, which enable him to do really clever things like turn invisible. The main dude actually moves quite a bit like Shinobi in that he crouches, jumps and can perform a double somersaulting jump to gain extra height – in fact the gameplay could be described as fairly similar too.

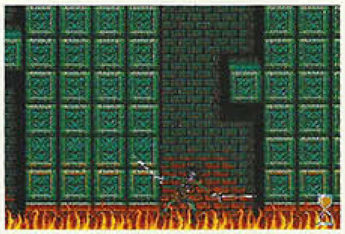
Graphically, however, this is a whole new kettle of fish. The visuals throughout are looking pretty impressive – it's all rather dark and sinister and the characters aren't your run-of-the-mill musclebound geeks and flic-flaccing ninjas. No, this is a fantasy slash-'em-up, and the transition from comic book to computer game is very obvious (in other words there is actually more than an ounce of imagination in here). Whether the gameplay will match up to the looks remains to be seen, but we'll let you know as soon as is humanly possible – hopefully in the very next issue of MEGA.



Use a potion to turn invisible. It's only for a short time though...

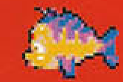


Oh, and if an enemy attacks, try actually facing him. It does help



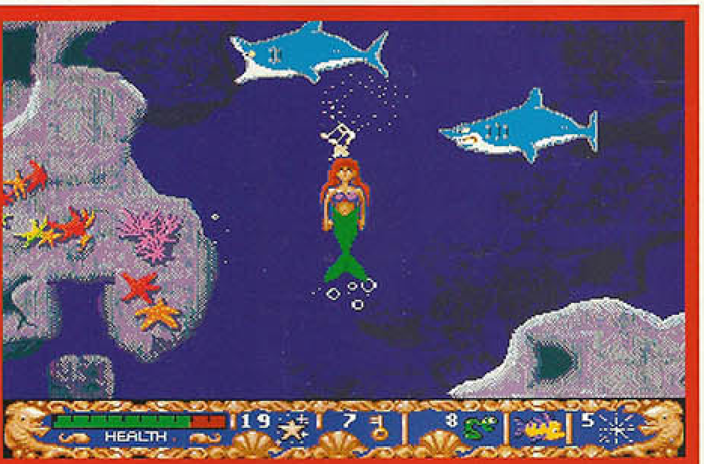
Oh dear. Chakan's made a bit of a boob. And now he's burning horribly

ARIEL THE LITTLE MERMAID

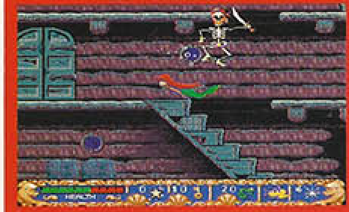


Sega • March

Yes indeed, we're all devotin' our time to floatin' here at MEGA so we can take a sneak peek at *Ariel*



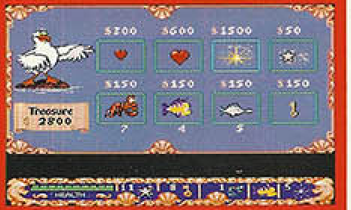
Sexist caption alert. Phwoar, it's no wonder the sharks are smiling, with a shapely lass like that right next to 'em. Cor blimey, look at the... etc



Having no eyes, the skeletal pirates can't see Ariel swimming beneath

At first sight this appears to be a sort of *Ecco* for kids. For a start, the main character (that's Ariel) moves exactly as you'd expect a mermaid to move, and that's in exactly the same way as a dolphin, isn't it? However, the controls aren't quite as slick as those in *Ecco*, so it may take a bit of getting used to. I don't know how many of you have seen the film, but whatever your age, let me assure you that it's absolutely bloody brilliant. And to their credit, the programming team responsible for both the sound and graphics has captured the magic of the animated epic perfectly. The theme music from the film is spot on and the animation on the sprites is a joy to behold.

But before we accidentally launch into a full scale review, let's explain the story. Ursula is a large and rather foul sea witch. Triton is the king of the undersea kingdom, and Ariel (The Little Mermaid) is his daughter. Ursula keeps turning the Mer-people into polyps, so it's up to the gynaecologist to (NOOO! Little sea-polyps you git – Neil). So it's up to the player, as either Ariel or Triton, to explore the labyrinthine levels freeing the fellows. Once all the polyps have been turned back into Mer-folk, it's onto the next level. The levels are fairly varied, the graphics are looking great, but the long-term fun as yet remains a mystery. Find out more next month.

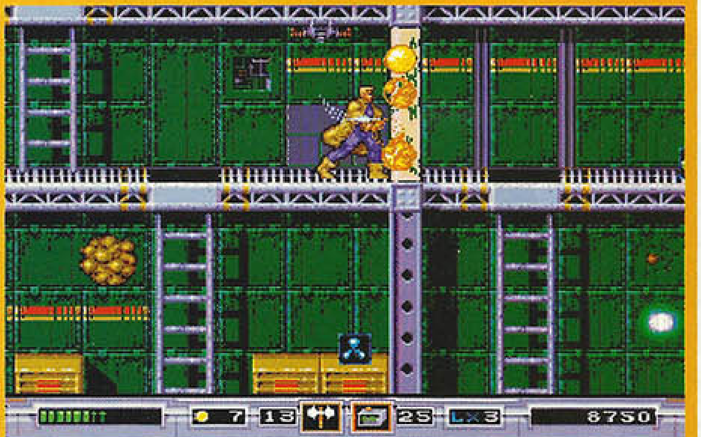


Find the seagull, and you can enter his shop for a whole heap of goods

EX-MUTANTS

Sega • February

Six mutants-turned-good-guys star in this, another game of the comic book


Here's one of the Ex-Mutants bashing through a rather flimsy wall. (It looks more like you in your crap olive flasher's mac Dyer – Neil). Erm, sod off!

Coding games based on comic book heroes seems to be very popular at the moment. First was Chakan, a pretty strange bloke himself, and now this curious bunch. The Ex-Mutants are a band of superheroes who have been created to fight off the advances of a horde of mutants, who are a result of the holocaust. After the war that all but destroyed the earth, the deformed survivors are out to take over, but a cyborg with a heart of gold turns six of the foul fellows into rather dashing and powerful heroes. Sadly, four have been captured so it's up to the remaining two (one bloke and one bint) to save the day. And guess what? Yep, it's you who'll be playing one of the two fine upstanding citizens.

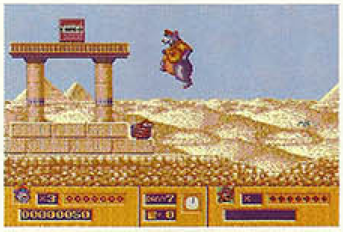
The graphics are sitting somewhere between not half bad and pretty flippin' good and as you can see, all the graphical elements have black keylines around them giving the whole thing a very comic-bookish feel. The platform formula is fairly standard, but there appears to be plenty of variety in there both graphically and gameplay-wise.

The Ex-Mutants is a very busy game indeed, and even the early levels are quite a force to be reckoned with – this may well be a cart for the more experienced gamer. Platforms and power-ups a-plenty seem to be on the menu here, so we'll look forward to reviewing the sucker in full next issue. See you then!

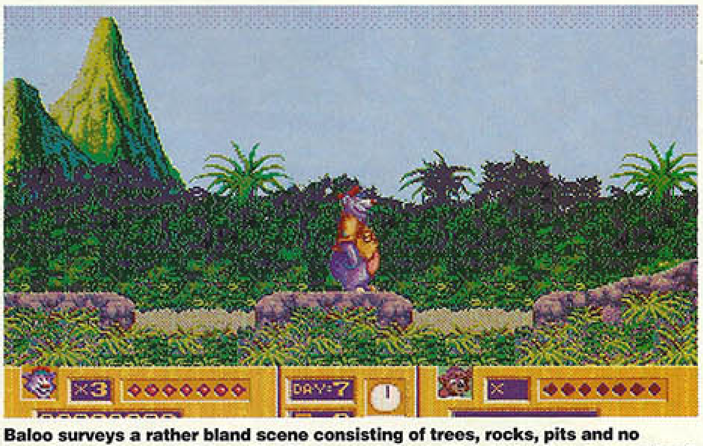
TALESPIN

Sega • March

Baloo the bear and chums go for a bit of a romp in Sega land. But is it kids stuff?


Here we can see Baloo jumping over a coiled snake. Exciting stuff?

TaleSpin is a telly series which features all the most exciting characters from that classic animated movie The Jungle Book. Remember? Do-be-doo, I wanna be like yoo-hoo-hoo, I wanna walk like you, talk like you (doo-be and doo-wah to fade). By controlling the two stars of the game, Baloo the bear and Kit the, er (shuffles papers to try and find information), the other one, you have to travel across nine levels, which take you all around the globe in a bid to save a failing cargo company called Higher For Hire. However, Shere Khan the tiger is also involved, and in order to win, you have to complete it all within seven days before the nasty Tiger can mess things up.


Baloo surveys a rather bland scene consisting of trees, rocks, pits and no enemies whatsoever. Looks like it's gonna be a thrilling little game, eh readers?

Of all the games we saw during our jolly Sega visit, this was probably the least inspiring (but just because a game doesn't grab you in the first few minutes doesn't mean it's not any good). The good news is that *TaleSpin* enables you to play simultaneously with a friend (just like *World Of Illusion*), so as with Mickey's last little adventure it may be that what is an average single-player game turns out to be a spiffy little two-player game.

Any more than that we can't really comment on at the moment, because in the time we had to see the game we, um, didn't really get very far. Graphically, it looks good enough and it may well be another cart for younger Mega Drive game players.

COMING SOON(ISH)...

Final Fight (CD) – Sega
One of the best beat-'em-up coin-ops ever gets the Mega CD treatment. All the levels and more.

Boogy Woogy Bowling – Viscon
Ten-pin bowling on your Mega Drive. What sport are they going to convert next – curling?

Dungeon Master: Skull Keep (CD) – JVC
The classic interactive, atmospheric RPG, that should be a stunner on the CD.

Hit The Ice – Taito
Coin-op ice-hockey. Not a serious *NHLPA Hockey* rival, just a good laugh.

Police Quest 3 (CD) – Sierra
Truth, justice, the American way and mom's apple pie. Save them all in your quest for evidence.

Space Quest 4 (CD) – Sierra
Search through the realms of time and space to rid the universe of evil beings. Something like that anyway.

Stellar 7 (CD) – Sierra
More space romping role-playing interaction with astounding graphics and sound.

Amazing Tennis – Absolute
A strange viewpoint – standing behind your character – but this could be quite good fun.

Chuck Rock (CD) – Sony
Chuck's back and he's on the CD. But I wonder how different the game is going to be.

Roger Clemens – Flying Edge
More baseball action. This is getting really silly. Try a different sport for God's sake.

Humans – GameTek
Previewed last issue, this *Lemmings*-alike is going to take some serious head-scratching to get through.

Jeopardy – GameTek
More TV Quiz show questions from the same guys who brought you *Wheel of Fortune.*

Lightning Force – Sega
Er, actually don't know a lot about this, but from the title it could be a shoot-'em-up.

B-Bomb – Sega USA
More strange platform action from Sega, including a guest appearance from Sonic.

Batman: Revenge Of The Joker – Sunsoft
More platform antics from Sunsoft as Batters has to face ol' green hair once more.

Championship Bowling – Mentrix
Well, it's ten-pin bowling, isn't it? You'll either love it or hate it.

Clue – Parker Bros
A Mega Drive version of the classic board game Cluedo. If you like the game, you'll like the cart.

Fatal Fury – Takara
Another beat-'em-up not unlike *Streetfighter 2.* Capcom have started something, haven't they?

Final Zone – Renovation
A pretty standard looking shoot-'em-up, except it uses isometric 3D visuals.

King Of The Monsters – Takara
A wrestling game set in a city where the competitors take the form of giant monsters.

Nolan Ryan Express – Mentrix
If I see another baseball game, I'm going to heave. It'll probably be OK though.

Star Odyssey – Sage's Creation
Standard RPG stuff as you wander around villages asking the locals pertinent questions.

Toys
You are transported to a fantastic world full of giant toys in this graphically stunning game.

Wolf Child – JVC
A bloke gets turned into a wolf in a hideous genetic experiment. So starts this all-action scrolling platform game.

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TO BE THIS GOOD TAKES STANHOUSE ENTERTAINMENT

REVIEWS

Here we go again, the part of the mag which gives you an idea of how truly unwell the MEGA team is

February's upon us, and you know what that means, don't you? Er, well, it's the time when we celebrate, um... (Psst! Andy, absolutely nothing ever happens in February. You're going to have to bull your way through this one – Neil). It is, of course, the time when we pay homage to... The Dancing Sheep of Swindon (oh god).

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MICRO MACHINES

If those famous Swindonian fluffsters were into racing games, this one would surely make their fleeces stand on end. *Micro Machines* may not look the part, but it's one of the best racing games ever produced.

F1 racing on a pool table. Weird!

AFTERBURNER 3

As one infamous gyrating Ewe once said, "Baaa, bleat, bleatty-bleat, bleat, baaa!". Of course, what she was trying to say was, "Why join the sheep dance when you can play *Afterburner 3* instead?" This caused outrage among the sheep community and said sheep has now been dropped from the Sheared Formation Charleston Team.

ROLO TO THE RESCUE

Tragically, during a rather frantic rhumba at last year's Swindon Sheep Dancing Festival, three rather dashing rams were killed. We therefore dedicate the review of this animal-filled platform extravaganza to those brave woolly wonders who gave their lives so selflessly in the name of dance.

Fat bloke on page 48

PGA TOUR GOLF 2

It's a well-known fact that sheep can't play real golf. This explains, in part, their obsession with dance. However, in between their farmyard strutting sessions, they like to play Mega Drive golf games. Hurrah, then, for *PGA Tour Golf 2.*

***PGA Tour Golf 2* tees off on page 52**

RATINGS

It's the easy-to-read rating system. Take a look.

How many players can play the game at any one time?

Skill levels? Yes please. Here we tell you how many there are

How many lives are you given? And how many continues?

A game with this icon has a password system!

Even better, a game with this icon comes with battery back-up!

Sonic 2's got 20, but *EA Hockey* hasn't got any. Stages that is

Import carts are shown with one of these logos, from America or Japan

GRAPHICS 9

●●●●●●●●●○

Five game components are rated individually out of ten. Here's what we look for in each:
GRAPHICS: Clear presentation, animation, scrolling, collision-detection, design, speed
SOUND: Music, FX, samples and speech
GAMEPLAY: Movement, control mechanism, difficulty, challenge design and fun element
GAME SIZE: How much does the game offer? Are the levels big? Is there a league option?
ADDICTION: Er, is it addictive?

"What we think of the game, be it praise or a slagging"

WHO'S WHO?

NEIL WEST

Sorry is often the hardest word to say. So the members of the MEGA team were asked what the worst thing they had ever done was and if they were sorry. "I'd like to apologise to the readers for plucking Andy Dyer from obscurity and letting him loose on MEGA. You'll never know how truly sorry I am. Still, one more farce like the Annual Swindon Sheep Dancing Festival and he's out."

ANDY DYER

"I once switched on an electric bar heater and touched the bars to see how quickly they warmed up. I then realised that the current actually flows along the outside of the bars and proceeded to dance a merry 240 volt-induced jig around the living room. I was sorry I ever embarked upon such a ridiculous experiment. Next time I'll try something safer like drinking cyanide."

PAUL MELLERICK

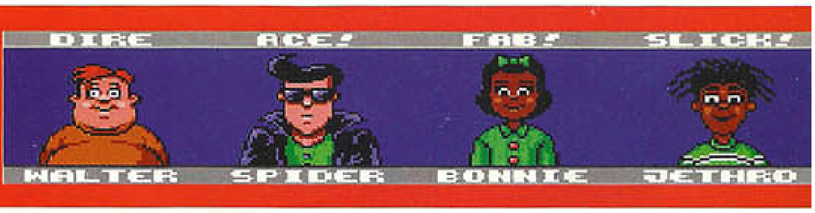
When questioned about regretful things in his life, Paul couldn't think of any. His life has been one long string of peace, harmony and loveliness. Until, of course, he had a sudden flashback to the days when he worked for Sega Force. Apparently that was about as much fun as "sliding slowly into a hot salt bath after receiving a thousand lashes to the rump". Ooh er!

AMANDA DYSON

In her youth, Amanda was playing "Throw the bean-bag frog" with a friend of hers. The frog landed in the fish tank, a fish leapt out, and young Amanda watched it thrash about for a few minutes before it lay very still in a very dead manner. Amanda would like to apologise to Mr and Mrs Fish for mercilessly slaughtering their little finny offspring. No doubt her reward will be in hell.

MEET THE COMPETITORS

There aren't exactly skill levels in *Micro Machines*, but you can individually select your computer opponents – each of whom has different amounts of talent behind the wheel. The opponents range from the "ace" Spider, to the utterly "dire" Walter (who also happens to be rather portly). You can either choose a load of easy opponents first so you can rattle through the early levels, or perhaps start with the harder ones so you can knock them out of the competition quicker. Either way, you're going to have a tough time of it.



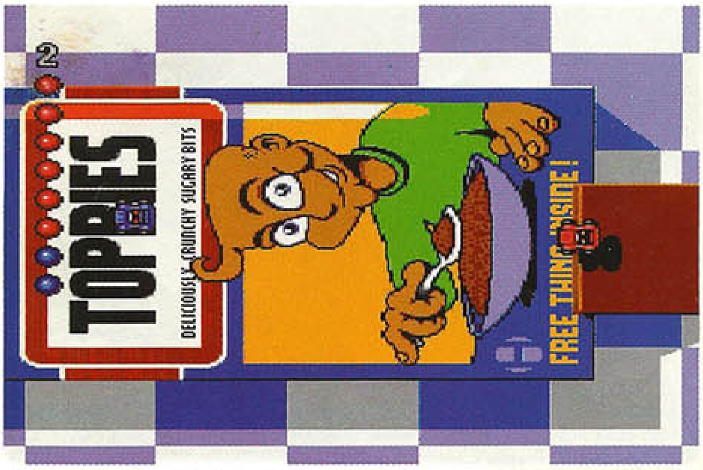
Top speeds of, ooh, at *least* 10 mph, basic graphics and toys – doesn't sound much cop, does it? Well come with Neil West as he burns rubber (pausing only to wave two fingers at Ayrton Senna) in the best two-player race game he's ever played

Adios Ayrton. There's a new racing demon in town and (assuming that you've got some friends to play against) it's more fun to play than your *Super Monaco Grand Prix* game ever was. Converted from the award-winning NES game, the Mega Drive version is the astonishing debut offering from Codemasters – a UK based team of whiz-kids also responsible for that infamous (and decidedly useful) cheating device, the Game Genie.

As followers of Sega news will know, ALL games have to be passed by Sega themselves before they can be released. In this way, Sega effectively keep control of who publishes what (EA, Virgin Games and so on are only allowed to release a set number of games each year, and then these have to be checked). Ballistic recently "went it alone" and published games without so much as two seconds' thought for whether Sega liked it or not. Needless to say, Sega weren't very happy, but Ballistic emerged victorious from a long, drawn-out court case. Codemasters are now following in Ballistic's footsteps and, with a bit of luck, *Micro Machines* should be just the first of a whole range of releases.

TOYING WITH *MICRO MACHINES*

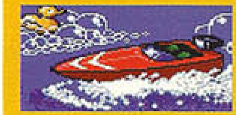
We've been wibbling on about *Micro Machines* in MEGA for quite some time now, and we've finally got the finished version to sit down with, review and lose



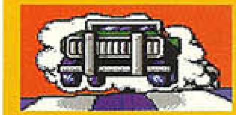
Codemasters' breakfast cereal, Toppies, makes an appearance on the breakfast table level. Like all cereals, it'll make you poo yourself

ONE CAREFUL OWNER...

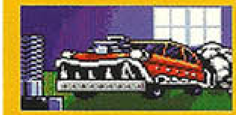
Honest Ron here, we've got some great specials on at the moment sir. How about the 4x4 thrustomatic? OK, so it's prone to plummeting off the edge of pool tables, but all the '88 models did that. It's all part of their unique charm. All right then, how about the racy little... oh, bugger. The door just came off. OK then, perhaps you'd like to try one of these little beauties?



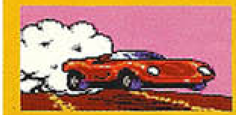
At the start of the game you'll need to qualify by taking part in a really easy boat race. It's that easy that anyone who fails this should be strung up. Later in the game you also take part in other boat races, which contain additional hazards such as rubber ducks, bars of soap, whirlpools and curious bits of corrugated tube.



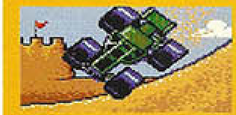
The first real race takes place on a breakfast table. In this race you drive a 4x4 vehicle which has all the handling of a damp sock. How you'll scream as you plummet onto the kitchen floor. How you'll gasp as another blob of marmalade slows you down. How you'll beat the crap out of your best friend when he shunts you through the milk.



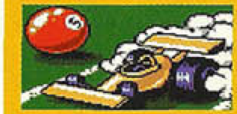
This vicious-looking beastie is a warrior. Basically, it's some old American heap of a car with big spikes on the front so you can ram your enemies into oblivion. Acceleration is pretty poor, but that's the least of your worries. The race takes place on a workbench which is littered with oil, nuts, bolts and pools of glue.



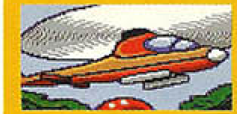
The Desktop Dropoff is the first race in which you'll be able to try out some serious racing kit. Climb into your Corvette and head for the hills (or in this case the books and notepads that adorn the desktop). Other hazards to watch out for are thin bridges made out of rulers, and blockages in the form of erasers, pencils and so on.



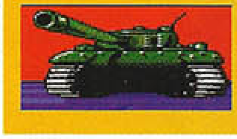
One of my favourite levels is the Sandy Straights. These little dune buggies hold the road (or beach) like nobody's business, and a good result really comes down to the skill of the driver. Later in the game you'll have to do more complex courses in this little beauty, and the hazards come thick and fast. Hang onto your pants.



Did I say Sandy Straights was my favourite level? Well actually, this might be instead. It all takes place on a pool table with Formula One cars trying to ram each other into the pool balls. You also have to race around the outside of the table taking care not to fall off the edge or into any of the pockets.



This is possibly the most annoying level in the whole game. The venue this time is a greenhouse filled with plants. The trouble is, the dense foliage makes it almost impossible to employ any amount of skill in your flying. As soon as you overtake an opponent, a stray leaf will bounce you hither and yon. Also, beware of the sprinklers!



The tank level is almost as annoying as the helicopter level. These slow-moving vehicles not only manoeuvre as well as a bison with an inner-ear problem, but they can also get blown up by an opponent's shots. Yes, the tanks can shoot at each other. Again, victory comes about through luck more than good judgement.

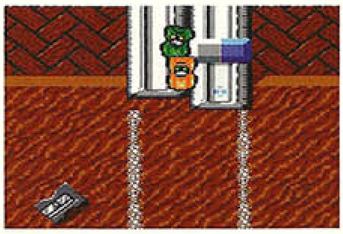
MICRO M

CRAZY!
WILD
SMOOTH
FAIR
ABLE
RASH
POOR
CHERRY
EMILIO
JOEL
ANNE
CHEN
MIKE
DWAYNE
YUCK!

eight days sleep (and all our friends) over. So, what's so great about the game? It's not a coin-op conversion, the graphics are primitive, there's no big-name endorsement and you can forget your Formula One, 300 bhp state-of-the-art Lotuses – *Micro Machines* puts you behind the wheels of toys: toy 4WDs, toy helicopters, toy racing cars, toy tanks and toy speed-boats – hardly the usual ingredients of a classic Mega Drive game, are they?

Playing *Micro Machines*, however, is so bloody fab that we don't care about classic components. No, Toys R fine by us! (sorry about that). Anyway, as I've just said, *Micro Machines* puts you behind the miniature steering wheels of a whole load of toy vehicles. You can't really tell that they're toys (it's not as if the wheels fall off every five minutes, and they do actually have engines), but what will strike you as strange is the terrain you're negotiating: over breakfast tables, in the bath, through a garden and even around a pool table, to name just four of the courses. In other words, giant oranges, globs of glue, huge pool balls, swirling plug holes and the occasional cornflake make up the boundaries of the tracks.

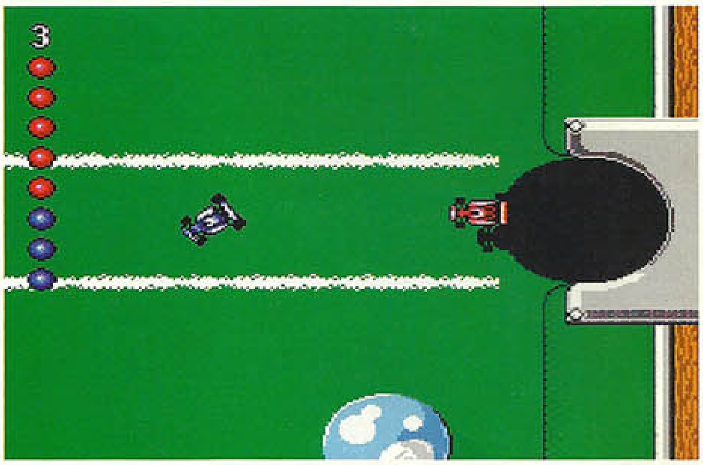
Racing a toy car around a breakfast table is bloody fab


"The orange and the green car had a race, all green wanted to do was stuff his face..." Erm, no – that's not right

Actually, that's not entirely true. The boundaries of the track are two lines of parallel dots, but the obstacles surrounding (and sometimes on) the track are the assorted gubbins mentioned above – and it's these that you really have to watch out for. The oranges are gits, trust me.

So you've got a selection of vehicles to choose from, and all you then need are some people to race against. This is where it all gets a bit complicated.

The best type of racing the game has to offer is the two-player head-to-head. What happens is this: you choose which vehicles you want to race, and two cars (one red, one blue) appear side by side on the starting line of whichever track it is that corresponds to the sort of vehicle you've chosen (you're not going to race tanks around a bath, are you?). Each player is awarded with five "points", the lights turn green (or whatever) and off you both race around the track. The idea now is to race ahead of your opponent so he disappears behind you off the screen. The screen-scrolling follows the lead car, so if the gap between the two cars is bigger than one screen size, one car disappears. At this point the action stops, one of the slower car's points is awarded to the faster car (the score is now 6-4) and the race starts again from wherever on the track the lead car had got to. One car is declared the winner when the score is 10-0.


Plummet down one pocket on the pool table and you emerge at speed from another one. Yes, yes, so it looks dull as ditchwater, but trust us, it's superb

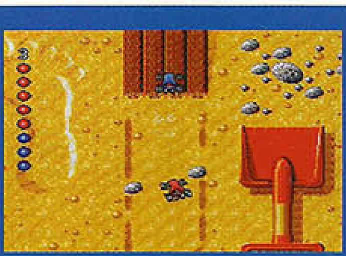
ALL THOSE OPTIONS

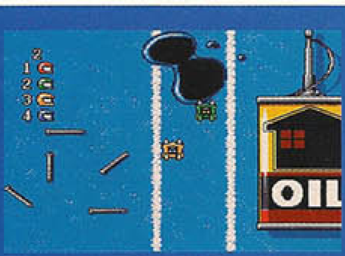
Follow all that? Good. Now there are also races against three computer cars, races against solo computer cars, tournaments over a series of races, one-off grudge races, bonus races, races against progressively more skillful drivers and still more races besides. Yep, the range of options caters for players of

Turn over

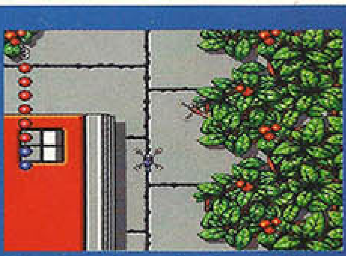
THREE ENTIRELY UNRELATED SCREENSHOTS

Actually that's not entirely true, we've decided to group three piccies together because they're actually taken from each of the three main playing modes in *Micro Machines* – although to be honest it doesn't look as if there's that much difference between them, does there? You'll just have to take our word for it, that's all. Trust, dear readers, is a wonderful thing – hard to earn, easy to lose – a bit like an expensive curry, really.

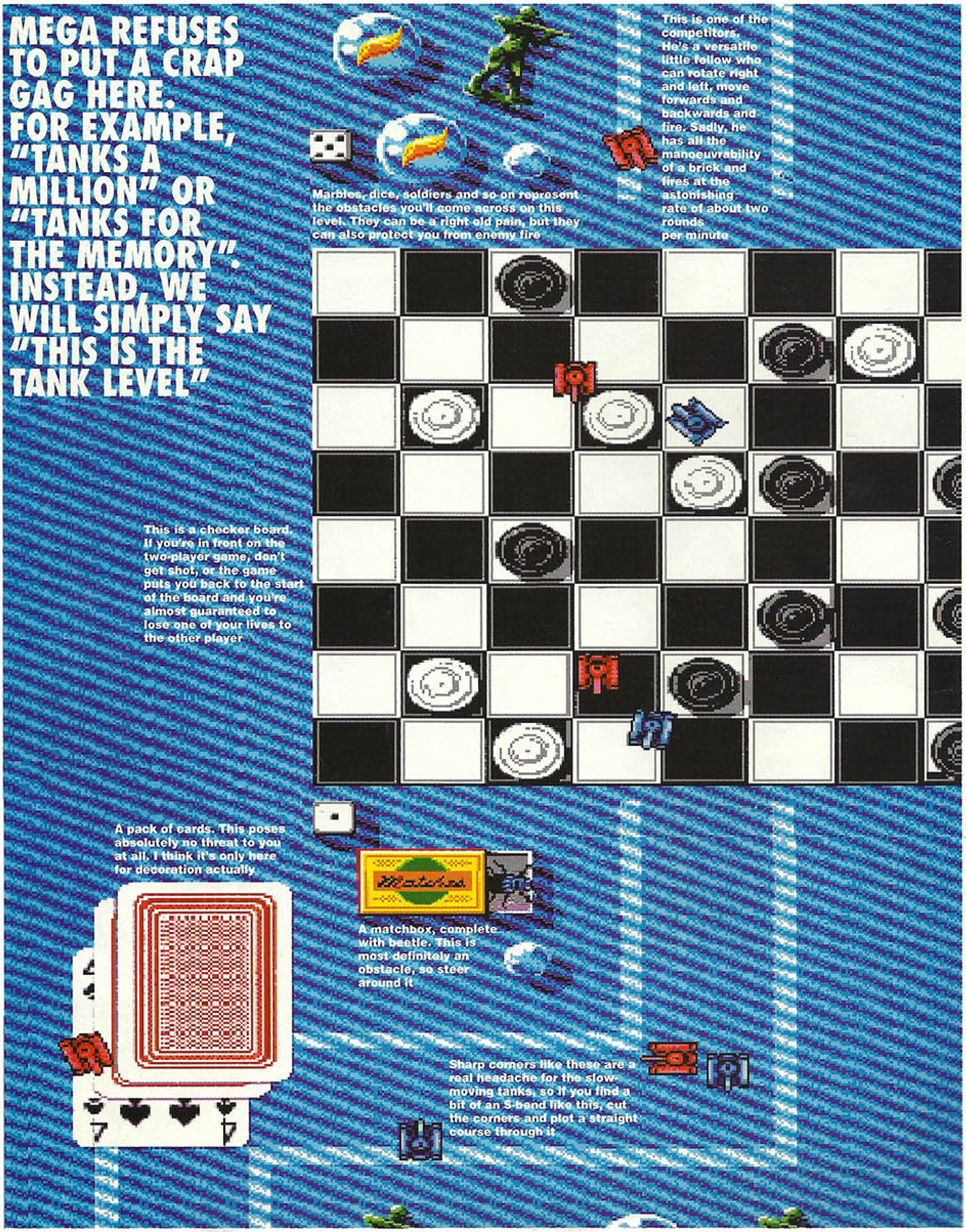

Head-to-head two-player racing is the best of all. The red and blue dots indicate who's winning (as soon as they all go red, red has won) and the number three indicates that our two racers are on lap three. The fetching red spade and the fiddly little pebbles are to be avoided. Got that?



Green and orange fight it out for second and third place in a one-player game against three computer-controlled opponents. Those nails and that oil can block your way, while the oil makes you skid. Each car's race position is updated and displayed on the left of the screen


Now, OK, this may look very similar to the first screenshot (red and blue dots, number threes and so on), but trust us – this isn't a two-player game at all. Oh no, one of these helicopters is being driven by the Mega Drive. Sneaky eh? That red thing is a fan, so avoid it

ACHINES



MEGA REFUSES TO PUT A CRAP GAG HERE. FOR EXAMPLE, "TANKS A MILLION" OR "TANKS FOR THE MEMORY". INSTEAD, WE WILL SIMPLY SAY "THIS IS THE TANK LEVEL"

Marbles, dice, soldiers and so on represent the obstacles you'll come across on this level. They can be a right old pain, but they can also protect you from enemy fire

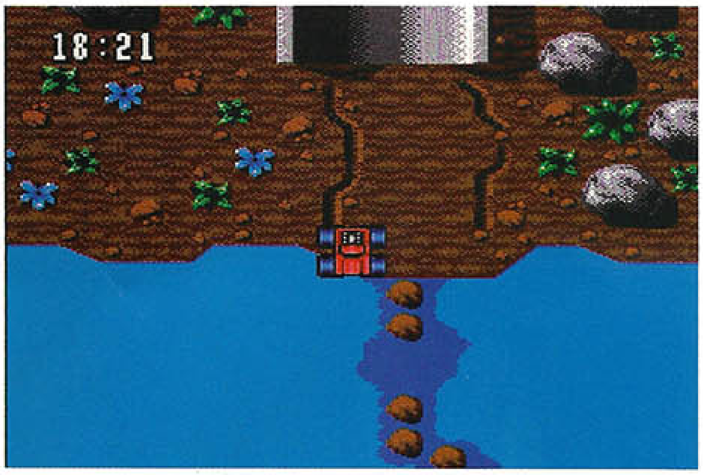
This is one of the competitors. He's a versatile little fellow who can rotate right and left, move forwards and backwards and fire. Sadly, he has all the manoeuvrability of a brick and fires at the astonishing rate of about two rounds per minute

This is a checker board. If you're in front on the two-player game, don't get shot, or the game puts you back to the start of the board and you're almost guaranteed to lose one of your lives to the other player

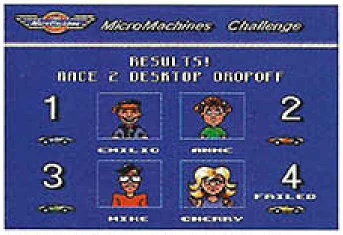
A pack of cards. This poses absolutely no threat to you at all. I think it's only here for decoration actually

A matchbox, complete with beetle. This is most definitely an obstacle, so steer around it

Sharp corners like these are a real headache for the slow-moving tanks, so if you find a bit of an S-bend like this, cut the corners and plot a straight course through it



In the bonus level extra lives can be gained by getting this huge truck around the course within a tight time limit



At the end of each one-player challenge two drivers are allowed to continue, but two are replaced. Just make sure you stay on the top...

all abilities and social popularity.

So what we've got is a ruthless head-to-head race game in which you get to drive toys around household objects. Still doesn't sound that special, does it?

Well, to be quite honest I don't know how I'm meant to explain why the gameplay is so fab. I mean, how would you go about explaining to someone why flying a kite is so much fun – holding a bit of cloth in the air with a couple of strings hardly ranks up there with Kim Basinger in a bubble bath in terms of obvious enjoyment potential, now does it? But as a gamesplayer, you'll know what I'm talking about when I say that *Micro Machines* just oozes playability, and has an addictive edge that'll keep you up all week.

You want me to be more specific? OK, I'll give it a go...

Part of *Micro Machines'* appeal has got to be the fact that the vehicles move supremely well, are dead easy to control, and are animated to perfection. Although we're talking about computer impressions of toys of the real thing, you do feel like you're driving the real thing (if you see what I mean), which can only be a bonus.

Another large part of *Micro Machines'* charm is the scheming, violent and downright dodgy cheating element of the gameplay by which it's easily possible to nudge your opponent's car off the edge of tables, shunt it sideways into a pool of honey or mercilessly ram it into a garden sprinkler. It's all good dirty fun, and (having watched Senna and our Nige' on telly) just like the real thing.

> **This game just oozes playability**

Then, of course, there's the variety of vehicles. Although they all handle in roughly the same way, each requires some specialist training before you feel entirely comfortable controlling it. The sports cars and Formula One racers are fantastically fast (for once you'll find that you can't push your computer car to the limit, you actually have to hold off with some of the power or the screen scrolls – get this – too fast to keep up with), the helicopters are a law unto themselves, and the tanks (complete with forward firing rocket launcher with which to take out your opponent) add an extra, if somewhat sinister, dimension again.

Then of course there are the courses themselves: cunningly designed to be big enough to offer straights, turns, bridges and jumps; sprawling enough to provide a large playing area; yet not so big that you can't (in time) learn the layout and take short cuts.

Oh yes short-cuts, there's another element. You don't actually have to stay on the track at all. As long as both cars venture off together, you can actually drive/hover/sail in any direction you want. Thing is though, if one player remains on the track when the other zooms off into the distance, then the other one wins. In this way, the car behind can often take short cuts that the player in front can't risk (if he streaks ahead as a result of going off the course, then the other player wins the point).

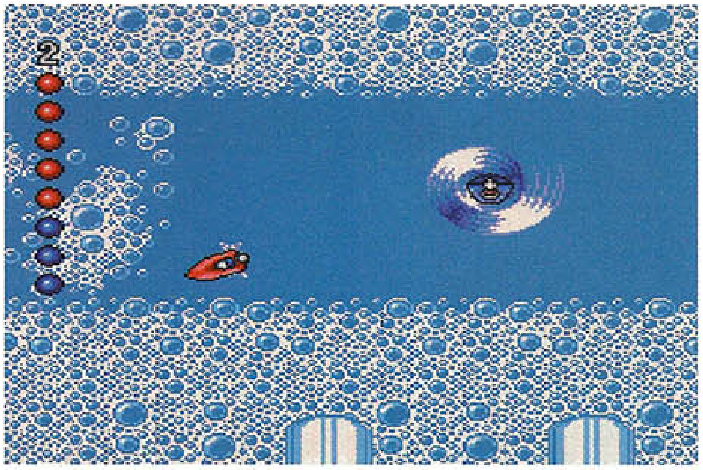
So what we've got is a fantastically simple game that relies entirely on its gameplay merits to take on the licensed big boys. That plus the budget-friendly price tag of £34.99 (a barg), makes *Micro Machines* an essential purchase. In the short- and medium-term, you won't be able to put it down, and you'll probably never tire of taking on a mate in a tournament sequence of races. In one-player mode you won't necessarily complete the game (those other cars get tough), and in the long-term you may find yourself missing the season and team options of *Ayrton Senna's Super Monaco Grand Prix.*

Still, these slight worries are nothing to knock *Micro Machines* from its status as one of the best two-player games ever, and arguably the best race game ever written. It really is fab. Buy it!

® *Neil West*

GET A GRIP!

- ↑ ↓ No function
- ← → Steers the car left and right
- Ⓐ Sticks your current vehicle into reverse – useful if you get trapped
- Ⓑ Accelerator. Press it, hold it, and don't let go. Full speed all the way
- Ⓒ Button C's functions are fairly limited, in that it does nothing at all



The only way to avoid this whirlpool on the bathtub level is to take a straight course right across the bottom of the screen. It's not easy. As you can see here, one succeeds while the other plummets down the drain

THE ORIGINAL
MicroMachines
SCALE MINIATURES
PRESENTED BY
CAMERICA
WRITTEN BY CODEMASTERS

PUBLISHER: Codemasters

PRICE: £34.99

RELEASE: January '93

CARTRIDGE: 8Mbit

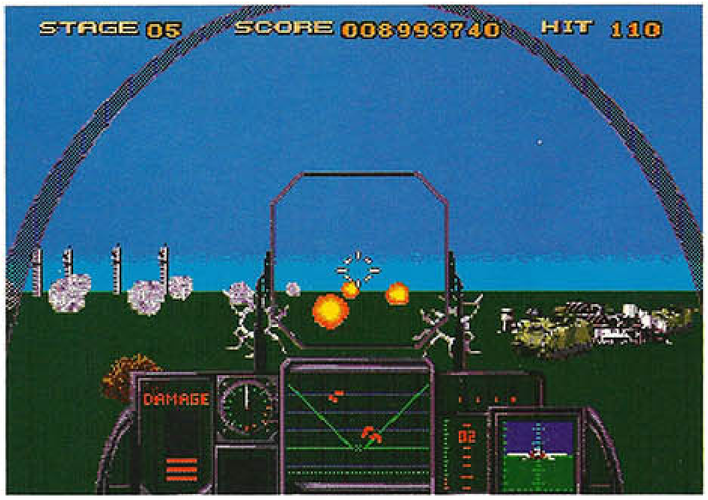
CONTACT: Codemasters 0926 814 132

- Play against your computer opponents or against a chum
- There are no levels of skill – you just get better and better
- You have three lives when playing against the computer
- No password system and no battery back-up
- You have to get through 27 courses to complete the game

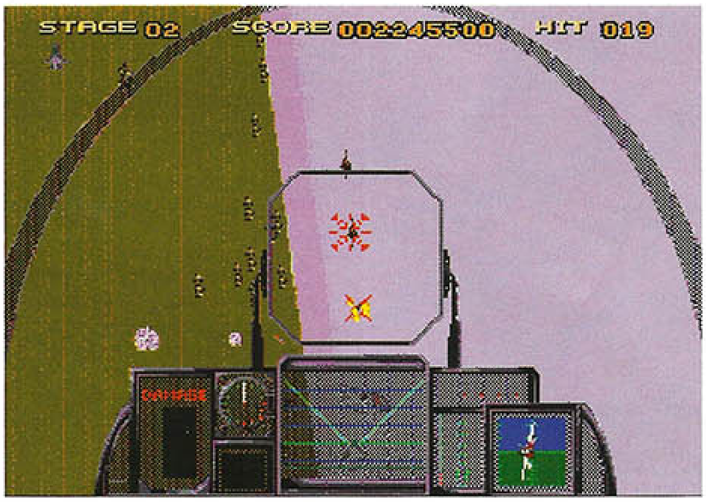
GRAPHICS	8
SOUND	7
GAMEPLAY	10
GAME SIZE	7
ADDICTION	9

> **"Fast, furious unstoppable two-player racing action. This game is destined to become a classic"**

92 PERCENT



See those holes in your cockpit? That's bad that is. Any more of those and your plane will explode. Move around a lot to avoid any incoming flak



Whenever your sights get near to an approaching enemy, the crosshair locks on to the target and you can let fly with a guided missile

This is the one Andy Dyer's been waiting for. If anything is going to be perfect CD fodder, it's this one. Roll on the stunning graphics, cue the scaled rotating sprites. Here's *Afterburner 3*... Oh *?!*!!

Woe is us. This isn't what we wanted at all. We wanted to see the Mega Drive sweat a bit. We wanted to see an arcade game in our home. We wanted to see an improvement over its predecessor. Did we get it? No.

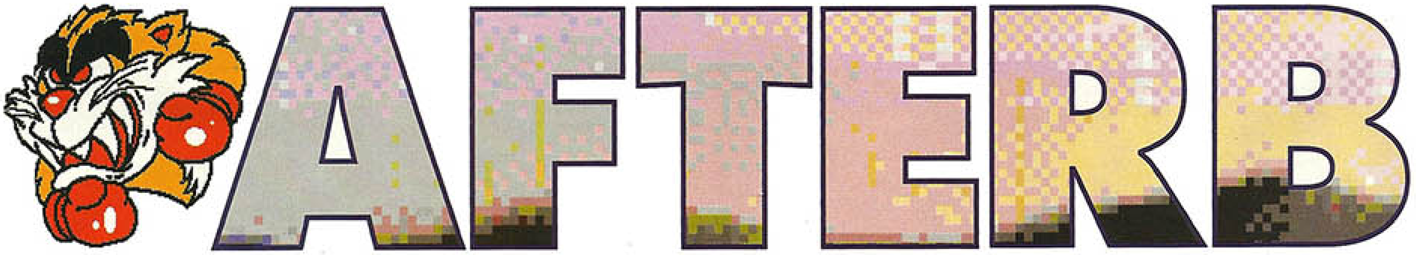
But before I go any further I'll just say that *Afterburner 3* isn't crap. It's fast, it's fun, but it's just *Afterburner 2* all over again. It's not, as we'd hoped, a spectacular showpiece for the Mega CD. It's not, as we'd hoped, something even vaguely approaching the dazzle of the coin-op. But most importantly, it's not, as we so rightly expected, a big improvement over the first game.

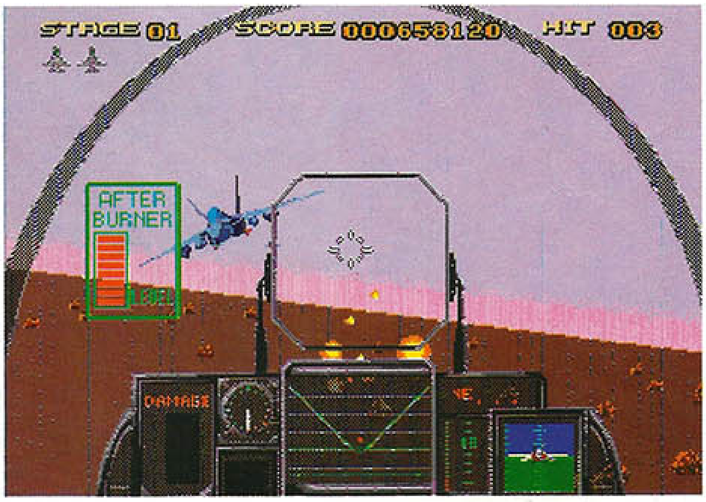
LESS SPECTACULAR THAN EXPECTED

If anything, this is even more straightforward than its predecessor. *Afterburner 2* could have been described as shallow and mundane if it hadn't been so damn fast and slick, so in the event it turned out to be quite a good blast. The sequel to this game, however, is disappointing. While *Afterburner 3* retains all the speed and gloss of the last game, important tactical options like conserving missile supplies have been taken out.

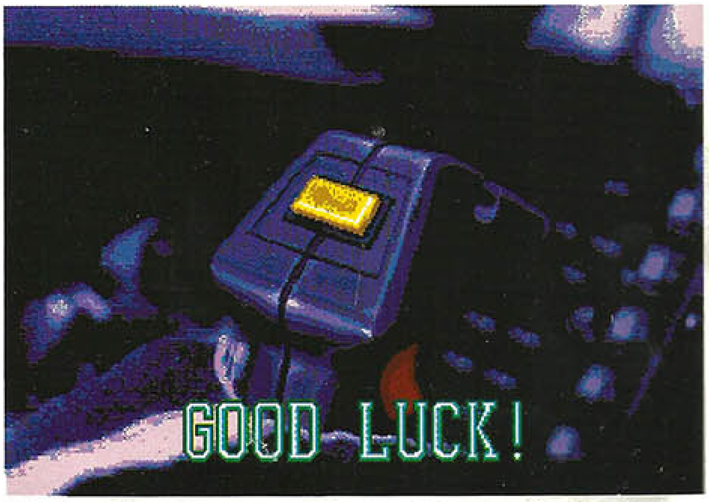
In this game you are equipped with infinite missiles, which enable you to simply keep blasting throughout. This, in turn, means that

Turn Over

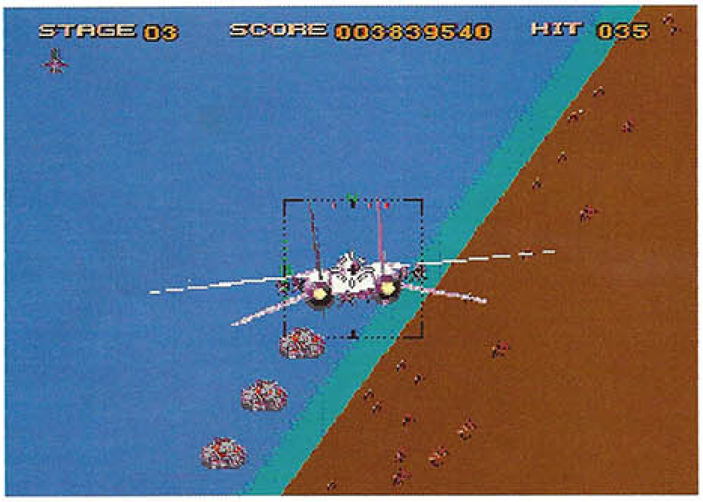




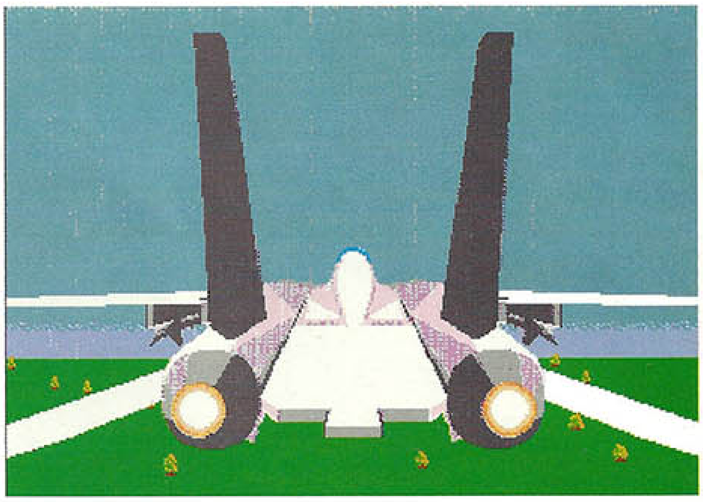
Hit button C and your afterburner kicks in. The gauge on the left appears and you get that extra little burst of speed you need to outrun enemies



This shot of your yoke appears at the start of the game, when the data is actually being loaded. It lasts only a few seconds but it's still annoying



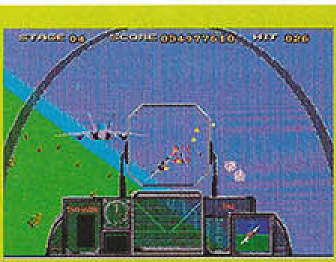
When the screen zooms out like this, you can see any enemies that are on your tail. You can also see plumes of smoke when you've been hit. Bail out!



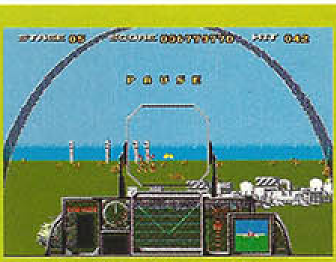
The most impressive part of the game is the zoom in. It's only for show, however, and it does get a bit boring after a while

WHAT'S NEW TOMCAT?

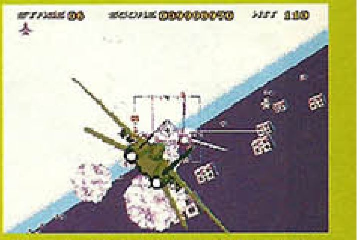
There's nothing really new about *Afterburner 3*. There are simply differences in gameplay. For example, they've dropped the mid-air refuelling section completely, but instead we've got the low-level bombing run to get our missiles into. As far as we can tell, there are only three really distinct stage types in the game. The first is the standard aerial combat type of thing. Then you get to swoop down over enemy bases in order to knock out buildings, pylons and tanks, and finally, there's the chase sequence in which you have to out run enemy planes and missiles. Let's take a closer look at each of these stages, shall we?



Much of the game takes place in the air like this. Planes zoom out of the screen at you and you have to either guide your gunfire at them, or target the blighters and release a volley of guided missiles

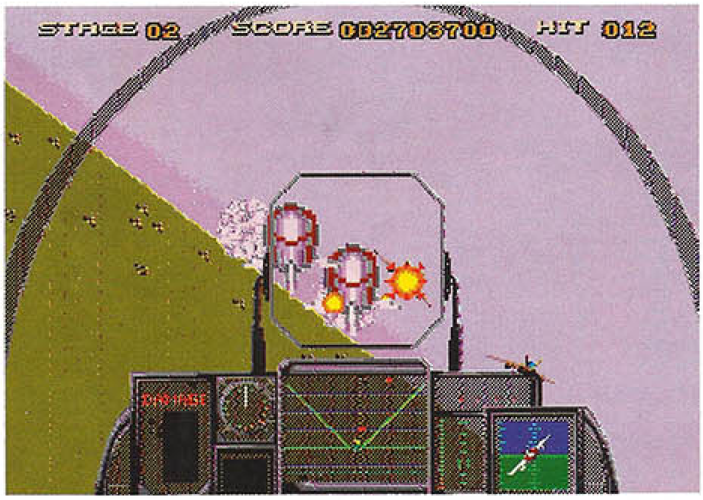


Occasionally you'll enter the bombing run. This is much the same as air-to-air combat except this time your targets are buildings and the screen scrolls left and right rather than rotating as you roll the plane

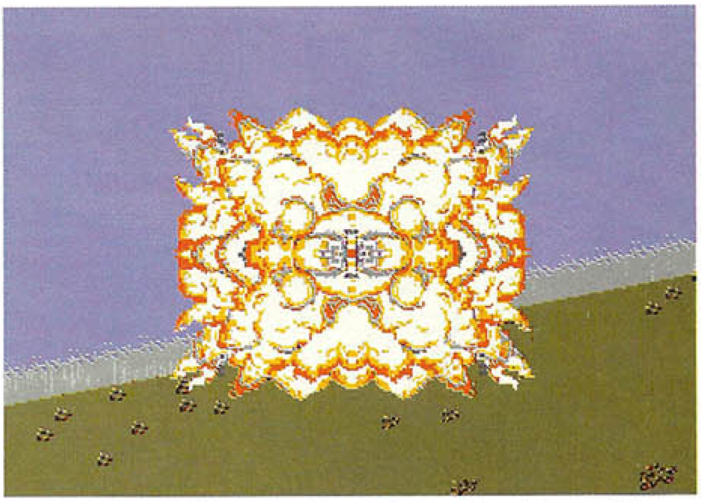


And sometimes, without warning, the view will change to show the back of your plane and you'll be tailed by either an enemy fighter or a missile. You can outrun them by using your afterburner

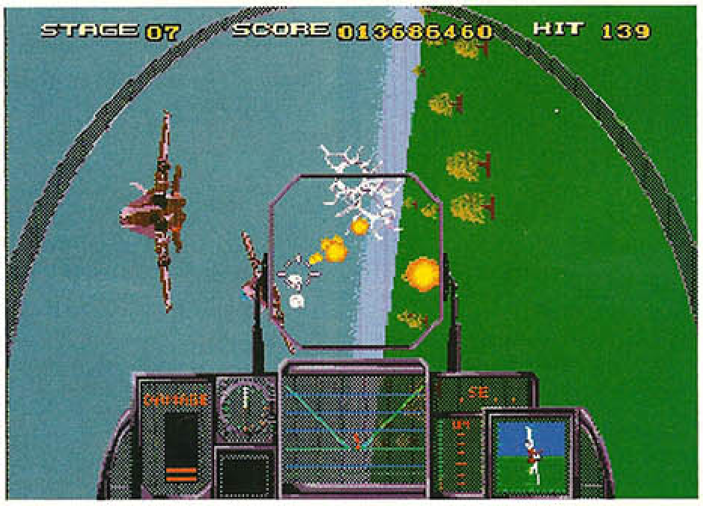
URNER 3



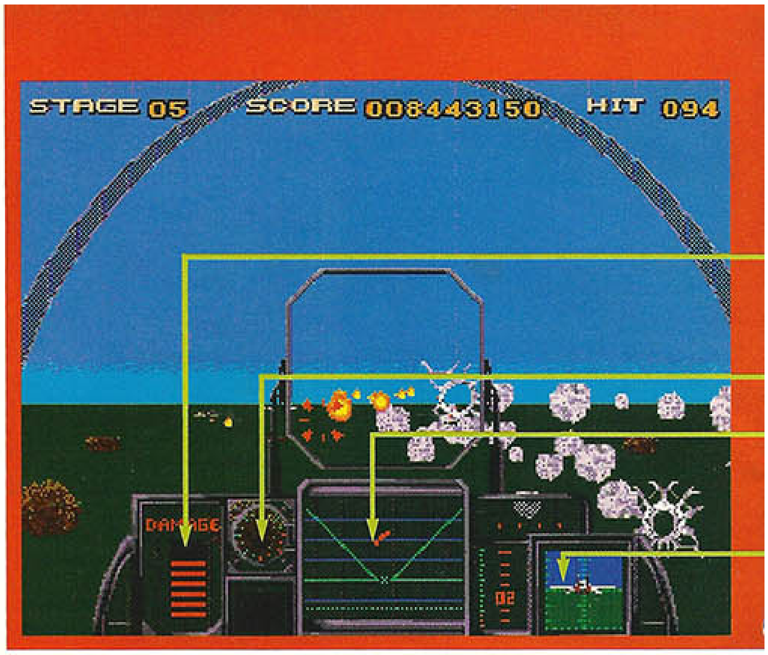
How not to succeed at *Afterburner 3:* Move around to avoid missiles. If you ever get to see something like this, it's too late to do anything and...



... BOOM! Yes that's right, you get to see the world in glorious explode-o-vision. Pretty spectacular. In fact it's almost worth dying just to see it



Nothing specific to say about this one really. Just thought you might like to see that the scenery does actually change. Note the highly realistic forest



the mid-air refuelling and power-up stage presence in the last game has been lost, and any modicum of thought required has also been removed.

We are, however, still looking at a pretty frantic blaster, but we don't want *just another* blaster when we've forked out several hundred quid on supposed state-of-the-art CD ROM, do we?

LOADING UP

Let's take a walk through the game from the start to see just what we have got. Load the game (yes, it takes a short while to actually load) and we get the intro sequence. On games such as *Time Gal* (reviewed on page 42 of this very issue of MEGA) the animation is fluid, and it approaches the sort of quality you'd expect from a laser disc. At the start of *Afterburner 3* you are presented with an animation sequence of a plane taking off, banking, then zooming into the distance. It is, however, very jerky and the frame update in places must be about as poor as a frame every 1-1.5 seconds. Still, this is only cosmetic criticism so let's not waste too much time here.

INCONSEQUENTIAL COMPETITION MODE

Next we get to the options screen. As is usually the case, we have soundtrack and sound effect options. Fine. Next, you will find the obligatory skill levels, which in this case are easy, normal and expert. Fine again. The controls can also be modified to suit your style of play. Pretty standard stuff. But what's this? There's a competition mode. But before you get too excited, it's not a simultaneous play option.

There are three game versions for you to try out. Play the normal game and you have to try to get through from start to finish and rack up a monumental score. Play the Time Competition and you play the game as normal, except that at the end of the game your time is displayed along with your score on the high-score table. Play the Hits Competition and, yep you guessed it, at

> **Take part in a low-level bombing run**

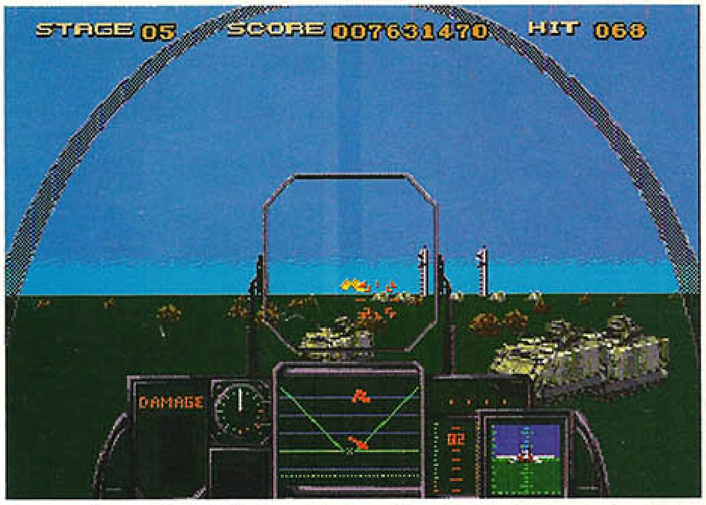
SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

There are three play options in *Afterburner 3*. You can play the standard game, the Time Competition and the Hits Competition. Basically, unless we're being entirely dense here at MEGA, all these options are virtually the same except for the data that's displayed on the high-score table at the end of the game. Then, depending on which option you choose, you'll be shown your score, how long you lasted or how many enemy planes you hit.

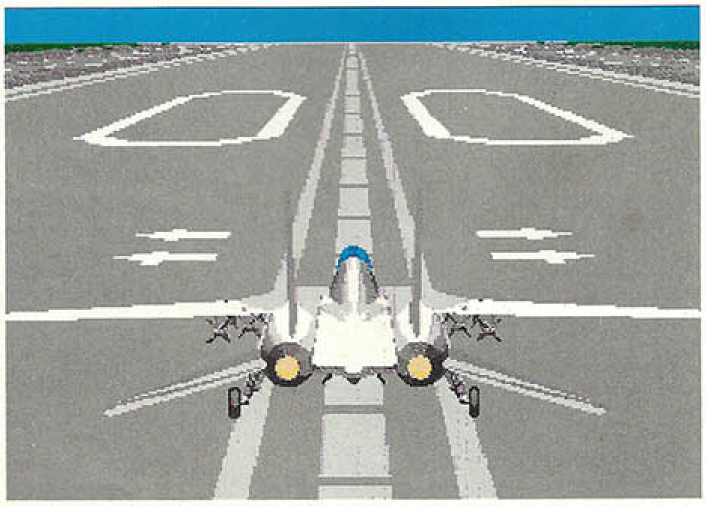
The standard game. Fire a lot, dodge about a bit, and try to reach the end

The Hits Competition. Fire a lot, dodge about a bit and try to... etc

The Time Competition. Fire a lot, dodg... Do I really need to go on?



Those curious indistinct blobs are tanks, although if the truth be known, they look more like camouflaged cereal packets. Shoot them before they get you



This is the very start of the game. Your plane takes off from the runway and you prepare for some crap scrolling followed by some even worse animation

THE COCKPIT

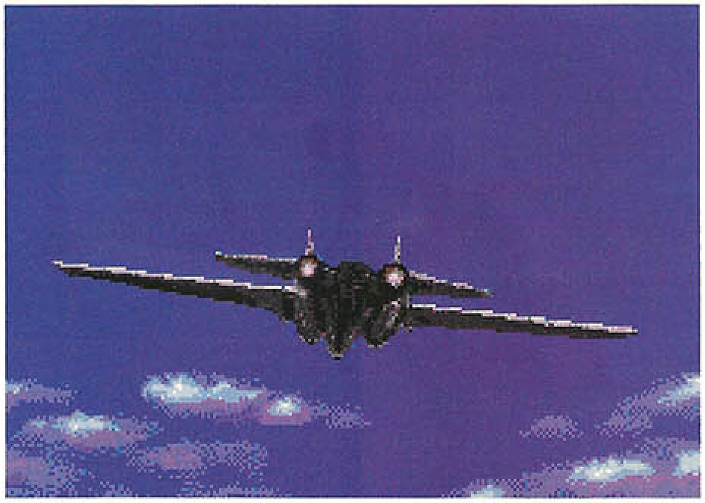
This is the screen you'll be gawping at for most of the game, and while it ain't the deepest of challenges you'll ever have to face, there are a few things in the cockpit you need to look out for.

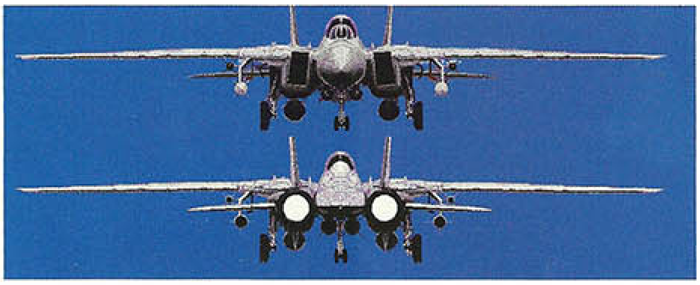
The damage meter. As you can see, things are looking pretty bad. It doesn't serve much purpose, but at least you can see when you're about to explode

Strange clock-type dial thingy. That's it really

Scanner. Keep an eye on this to see when enemies are approaching. It also tells you from vaguely which direction they're coming

This instrument shows which angle (pitch and yaw) your plane is at. It's totally useless for this game I'm afraid


This is another part of the stunning intro sequence. Shake this page around violently and you'll get an idea of how smooth the animation is (or, er, isn't)


This is the little beauty you'll be taking to the skies in. It's an F-14 Tomcat and as you can see, it has a front and a, erm, back. However, the Sega version of this aircraft has been somewhat improved because it appears to be able to carry an infinite amount of missiles. Strange, but true!

the end of the game the number of planes you've hit is recorded along with your score on the high-score table. Not exactly rivetting, is it? In fact you play the same game using all three options – the only difference being the stats which are displayed at the end.

VARIABLE VIEWS

Within the game itself a little effort has been made to make it *Afterburner 3* just a little bit different. For example, whenever an enemy missile or plane manages to creep up behind you, the view switches from one from inside the cockpit to a rear view of the plane in miniature. You then have to use your slow-down and afterburner buttons to out-manoeuvre the blighters. This effect was also used in *Afterburner 2*, except that with that game, the view never changed. Once you've lost Johnny Arab (or whoever it is you're fighting) the view switches back to the inside the cockpit one and it's carry on as you did before.

Also, every few stages you get a rest from the aerial dogfights and take part in a low-level bombing run. Trouble is, it's not so much a bombing run, as more of the same, but with pylons and buildings as targets instead of aircraft. Oh yes, and instead of rolling the planes during these sections, the view only scrolls left and right. It may be rather unrealistic, but it's a lot easier than targeting enemy installations while banking.

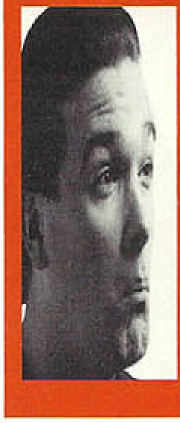
ON BALANCE

Great, so there's definitely some new stuff in there, but as I've already mentioned, you now have an infinite supply of missiles and the mid-air refuel has been lost. On balance, therefore, there's really not a lot here over and above what we saw in the last *Afterburner* game.

Personally, I love a good hard (Steady now – Neil) mindless blast (Phew – Neil), and this is definitely a good, hard, mindless blast, but no more so than you get with *Afterburner 2*. That's bad enough in itself, but what makes it worse is the fact that this is a Mega CD game. Even if you already own a Mega CD, try out both *Afterburner 2* and *Afterburner 3* and make up your own mind. If you have only a Mega Drive, don't blub into your hankie; buy *Afterburner 2* and you'll be no worse off than your cocky Mega CD-owning mate who always harps on about how lucky he is to have the best of both worlds.

Ⓐ Andy Dyer

NOT SO FAST... I WANT MY SAY



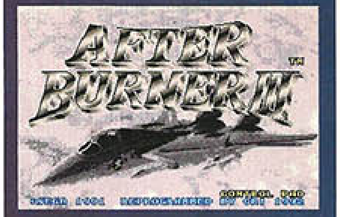
Well it's finally arrived. The Mega CD game the release of which Sega Japan have been promising for ages has now arrived. Well, to be completely honest they might as well have brought this out on cartridge instead. If this is intended to demonstrate the capabilities of the Mega CD (sprite rotation and scaling especially), then it fails miserably. The only bits which show off the Mega CD's capabilities properly are the sound (there's no excuse for mediocrity in this department anyway) and the little bit of scaling which appears when you move in and out of the cockpit of your F-14.

The game itself is nothing special. If you've played or seen the arcade or cart versions, then *Afterburner 3* won't offer you anything new or interesting. Having said all that, *Afterburner 3* is the only game of its type available on the Mega CD and if you really do like this sort of thing, then you may get some enjoyment from it. It's a shame, however, that the game isn't as visually stunning and enjoyable as we had been led to believe it would be. If you're after some good looking and playable CD games, then try *Road Blaster FX* or *Wonderdog*.

Ⓟ Paul Mellerick

GET A GRIP!

Ⓐ Ⓥ Ⓔ Ⓓ Moves the plane left, right, up, down
Ⓐ Slows your plane down – useful during air chases
Ⓑ Fires your guided missiles – lock on and let fly
Ⓒ This is your afterburner. Hit it to speed up and ditch those tailgaters



PUBLISHER: Sega (IMPORT)
PRICE: £39.99 (CHECK WITH CONTACT)
RELEASE: Out now
CARTRIDGE: Mega CD
CONTACT: Krazy Konsoles 0422 342 901

Just the one player

Three skill levels: easy, normal and expert

You've got three lives and three continues with this one

Absolutely no need for battery back-up with a game so simple

Stages? Ooh lots. More than we could get past anyway

GRAPHICS 8
●●●●●●●●○○

SOUND 7
●●●●●●●○○○

GAMEPLAY 6
●●●●●●○○○○

GAME SIZE 7
●●●●●●●○○○

ADDICTION 6
●●●●●●○○○○

"A frantic shoot-'em-up, but no improvement over its predecessor. Doesn't look like a CD game either"

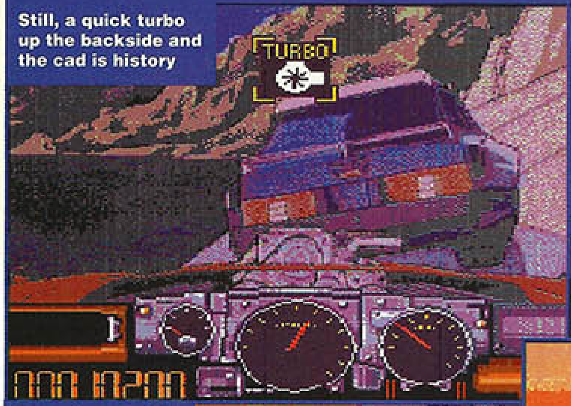
72 PERCENT

MEGA CD

ROAD BLASTER

After wrestling with the steering lock for three hours, "Wheels" Mellerick finally manages to start the car. Just a quick dash up the motorway and he'll be able to enjoy the Nirvana concert he's waited so long to see

"Get out of the sodding way!" shouts Paul angrily as two trucks try to sandwich him

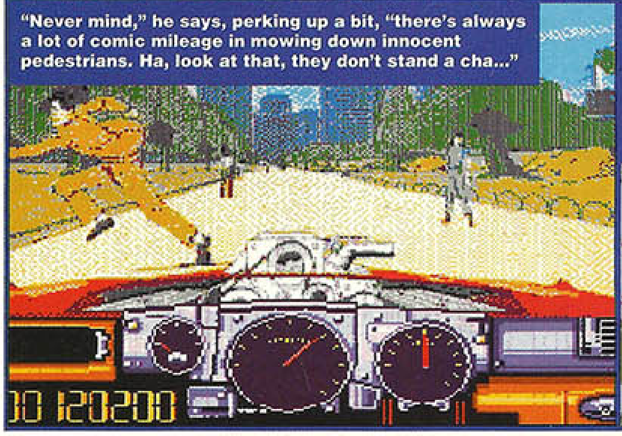


Still, a quick turbo up the backside and the cad is history

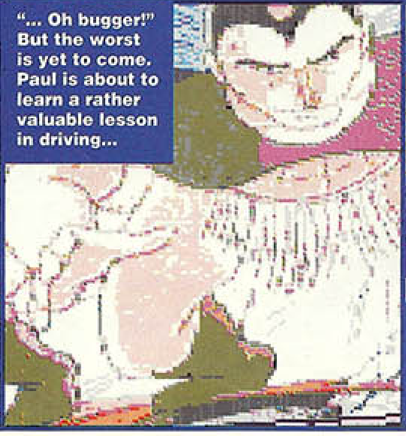
"Oh gawd, it's them again!" groans Paul and hits the brake

In no time at all Paul's back at the wheel just in time to hit rush hour

Paul gets depressed. Not only does this mean he'll miss the concert, it also means he has to continue writing this pathetic little tale

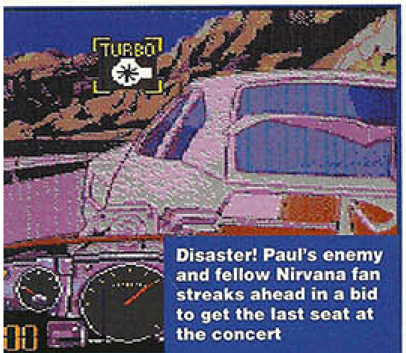


"Never mind," he says, perking up a bit, "there's always a lot of comic mileage in mowing down innocent pedestrians. Ha, look at that, they don't stand a cha..."



"... Oh bugger!" But the worst is yet to come. Paul is about to learn a rather valuable lesson in driving...

... Never, under any circumstances, drive your car around your 50th floor penthouse suite. The results can be catastrophic



Disaster! Paul's enemy and fellow Nirvana fan streaks ahead in a bid to get the last seat at the concert

FX

Sadly, he hit the gas instead and explodes, sending another bloke's car plummeting down a ravine

And what a tale it is. "How on earth am I going to link this picture in with the rest? It doesn't seem to follow at all? Oh well..."

Watch out Nige! Stand back Ayrton! Paul Mellerick is here to stick the pedal to the metal and get the foot to the floor. Let's just hope he doesn't get nicked for speeding...

I've always liked games which while being fun to play and all that, let you do something that you'd never get away with in real life. You know the sort of thing: walking the streets and bringing down a crime lord all by yourself by beating up 300 people (*Streets of Rage*); or taking on some galactic warlord and, using the only spaceship left, shooting down everything in sight (*Hellfire*).

Well, playing *Road Blaster FX* has fulfilled another one of my dreams: getting in my souped-up red (of course) sports car, driving like a maniac, running over various hooligans and getting away with it. But enough wibble, let's get on with the game.

HEALTHIER LOOKING, ALBEIT DECIDEDLY JAP, CD MARKET

Road Blaster FX is the latest CD game to appear in Japan, and after all these months of producing Jap RPGs, the CD market is looking really healthy. Hang on a minute though, *Road Blaster FX* sounds very similar to *Thunder Storm FX*, what's going on here?

Well, to put the record straight and to stop any nasty rumours spreading, *Road Blaster FX* is NOT the sequel to *Thunder Storm FX* – it's just programmed by the same people, Wolfteam. And if they like putting the letters F and X after a game title, who are we to argue?

One possible reason for the letters FX appearing after this game title is that the game structure is similar to *Thunder Storm FX*: you don't control all the action, you just take over at vital points in the game. The lack of excitement and the feeling of not actually doing much spoilt *Thunder Storm FX*, a game which was, in every other respect, a nice game. Can *Road Blaster FX* succeed where its younger brother failed? The short answer is yes, but let me elaborate a bit.

A VISUAL FEAST

To start with, *Road Blaster FX* is visually stunning. Now I know this sounds familiar, but to date there hasn't been a faster moving, better animated or more colourful game on the Mega CD. It beats *Thunder Storm FX* in a cocked hat (whatever the hell that means).

The sound effects are also more than satisfying (the sound the pedestrians make when you run them over or the squeal of the tyres as you brake and steer to make that last-second turn are really first class) and a thumping soundtrack means that things move along very nicely. (Ah, but what about the gameplay? – Neil)

Hold on, hold on, I'm getting there. You may remember that back in issue two of MEGA *Thunder Storm FX* was all graphics and not much else. All you had to do was sit back, watch the action and press the button when you needed to – not very inspiring and really quite simple. Well, Wolfteam have been working on things a touch since they produced *Thunder Storm FX*, and they have added bits and bobs to *Road Blaster FX*, which should keep you more interested.

BUTTONS, AND MORE BLOODY BUTTONS

The first major difference is the number of buttons you have to press. Not only do you have to control the steering of the car, but you also have to apply the brakes or use the turbo at the right time to clear or avoid whatever obstacles suddenly appear in front of you.

You also get drawn out of the action, which allows you to watch the various accidents you've caused along the way. You are then thrown back into the seat of your car (using some clever scaling) and back into the action.

The game is played over eight large levels, each one tougher than the last. The scenery is also very different from stage to stage, so you don't get bored looking at the same graphics all the time.

STUNNING DEATH SEQUENCES

Another great point about the game is the various ways in which you can die. If you don't execute your move at the right time and depending on where you are in the game, you'll get a small animated sequence showing your demise. The best one has got to be getting thrown through your windscreen when you drive through a hotel reception window.

Although the gameplay is basically the same as the other Mega CD games we've seen (*Time Gal* and *Thunder Storm FX* for example), the pace of the action is furious. You can't let up for a minute, and the great graphics, animation, sound and edge-of-the-seat action leave you gasping for breath. Well, nearly.

With only eight levels though and relatively easy-to-understand gameplay, this game should not prove too hard to finish. The last level, however, is a real toughie. You do get three continues, but if you're a hardened gamer, you might be better off not using them and trying to get through the game in one go.

Hopefully, *Road Blaster FX* will be the last of these pseudo-interactive games, because the Mega CD should really be breaking new ground and going even further ahead. But this is the most exciting, most playable and best-looking game yet to appear for the Mega CD.

® *Paul Mellerick*

GET A GRIP!

◀ ▶ Steers your car around the roads

Ⓐ Press button A to use the turbo to speed out of trouble

Ⓑ Press button B to use the brakes to avoid an unnecessary blasting

Ⓒ No function

ROAD BLASTER FX
PRESS START BUTTON

PUBLISHER: Wolfteam (IMPORT)

PRICE: £39.99 (CHECK WITH CONTACT)

RELEASE: Out now

CARTRIDGE: Mega CD

CONTACT: Krazy Konsole: 0422 342901

It's just you and your car

SKILL! Choose between normal and hard, depending on how good your reactions are

One to five lives – you choose

No battery back-up and no password system

There are eight stages in all

GRAPHICS 10
●●●●●●●●●●

SOUND 9
●●●●●●●●●●

GAMEPLAY 5
●●●●●●●●●●

GAME SIZE 5
●●●●●●●●●●

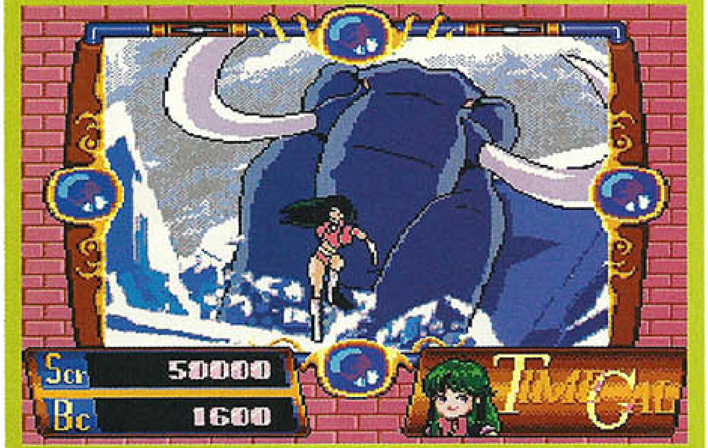
ADDICTION 8
●●●●●●●●●●

"Looks amazing, and the furious pace will keep you on the edge of your seat"

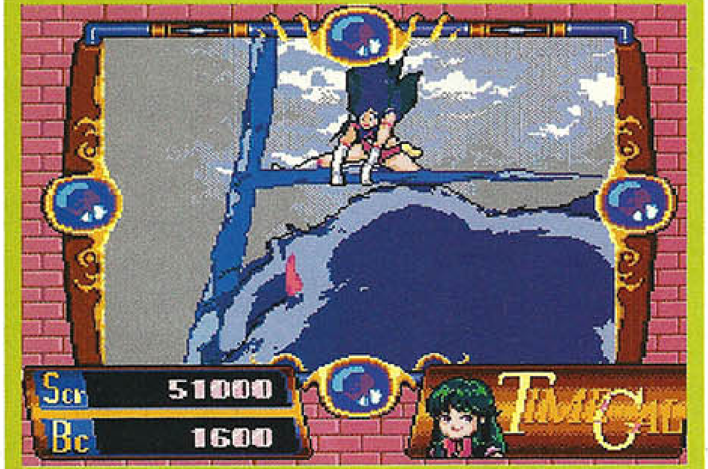
86
PERCENT

TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE

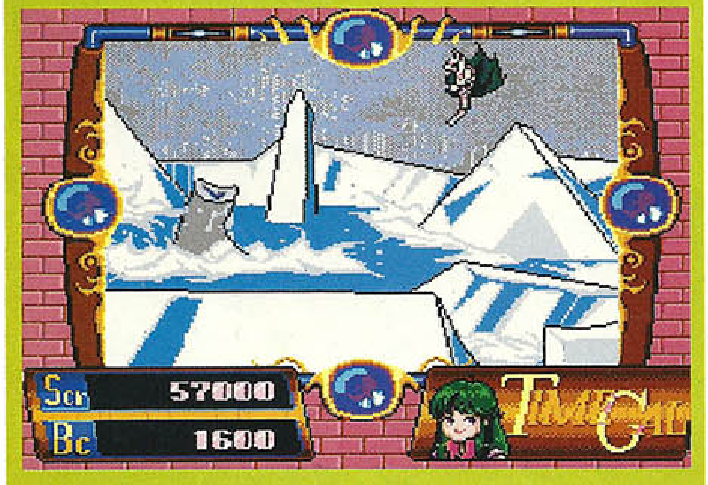
Just to show you how to get through a stage of *Time Gal* and what all this "interactive cartoon" gameplay is all about, we've broken down one of the smaller stages from start to finish, so you know what to expect. The year is 1600 BC and you've got to avoid the advances of a rather large woolly mammoth-type animal. Let Time Gal do all the running until a part of the screen flashes. Now press the corresponding direction on the joypad and watch her go!



You've started on your run and Woolly (as we like to call him) is hot on your trail. You need to press Right here to avoid his trunk



Back on the run again and as you pass under a branch press Up to back-flip over Woolly and land on his back



As Woolly runs into the sea and starts to sink, press Right again to jump onto the iceberg and finish the level. Phew!

Skipping through time armed with only your wits and a laser gun is not your average outing in the country, but Paul Mellerick's enjoying the trip

Er, excuse me, but isn't all this CD stuff getting very samey? First of all we got *Thunder Storm FX*, which was all graphics and no gameplay, then came *Road Blaster FX* (reviewed on the previous two pages), which improved on the former immensely, and now we have *Time Gal* (what no FX?), which comes somewhere in the middle.

Now, you'll have to bear with me here because with all this Japanese text and instructions, I may lose myself somewhere during the next 600 words or so. This is another one of those games that you're going to see labelled as an "interactive cartoon". Now, for those of you who wouldn't know an "interactive cartoon" from a hole in the ground, I'd better explain.

COMPLETE CONTROL?

The idea of an "interactive cartoon" (oops there we go again) is that the quality of animation and characters is as good as you'd see anywhere else (even on Rolf's Cartoon Club), but by controlling the game at certain key points, you get to decide what happens. If you're fast enough, you may survive and keep going. On the other hand, you might fall flat on your face. Sounds good in theory, doesn't it? In practice, however, these games are a bit of a let down, usually because there are only two possible outcomes from your actions: you either live or you die, and if you die you have to go through the same course of action all over again.

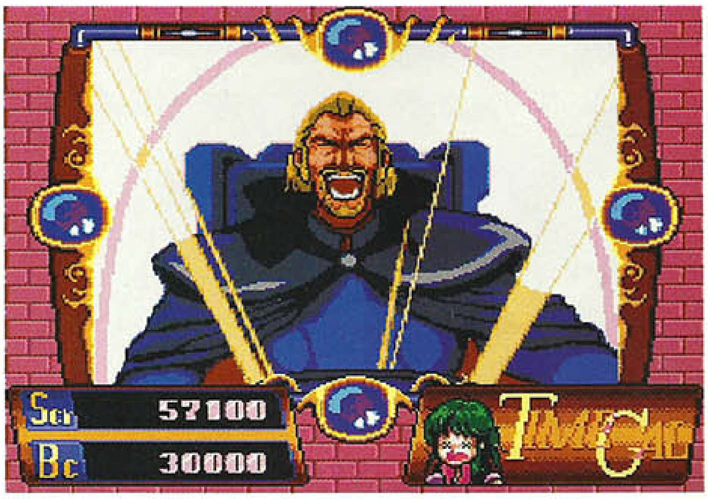
Wolfteam (the programmers of this *and Road Blaster FX*) have tried to spice up the gameplay by adding random elements into the game so that you're always kept on your toes.

> **Random elements will keep you on your toes**

Before we get into that, however, let's give you a quick run down on what the hell you're doing here.

You are the Time Gal (yep, you're a girlie, like it or not!) and you're after a fugitive. He (and you, for that matter) is from the future, but he escaped using a time machine and is travelling through various time periods to find somewhere safe to hide. You are chasing after him. You've got to

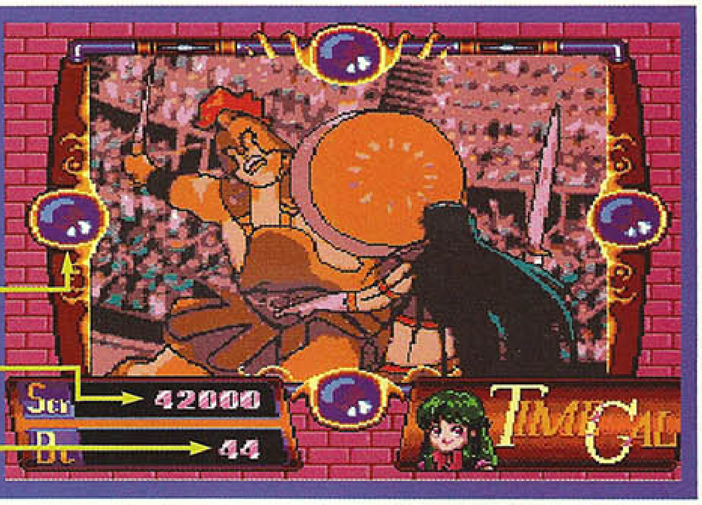
TIME



This is the guy you're after. His cheesy grin and his irritating laugh are enough to make you go hell for leather to whip his ar...

ER... WHAT?

This screenshot may look straightforward, but there's more going on here than you'd probably imagine. Check out the explanations below to find out exactly what's happening.



These four points of the screen, flash to show you which way to move. When they all flash at once, you need to press button B to fire your laser gun

This is your score. It's not very big at the moment I grant you, but it's still early days in the game

And this is the year. We've managed to go all the way from 70,000,000 BC to 1991

GAL

catch him by jumping through all the time periods he's passed through and then getting out again.

The time periods vary from 70,000,000 BC to the future, and the nasties that you come across vary greatly; from prehistoric monster and underwater "things" to pirates of the 16th century. And although you perform various acrobatic moves to avoid their attacks, all you actually have to do is press the joypad in the direction shown on screen. Simple gameplay – yes, but there is still more to this game that meets the eye.

In an effort to avoid the predictability of playing each level in the same order, Wolfteam have this time made things a bit more random. Each time you play the game you will play the levels in a different order: one time you'll start in 65,000,000 BC, the next time you might be in 1600 BC. And to make things even worse, the screen also flips viewpoints from game to game.

If you're playing through the 1600 BC period, you might have to press left to make the jump. Next time you play, however, the view might be flipped around, meaning you'll have to press right instead. This makes the game a lot more interesting, as you always need to be alert.

There is more to this game than meets the eye

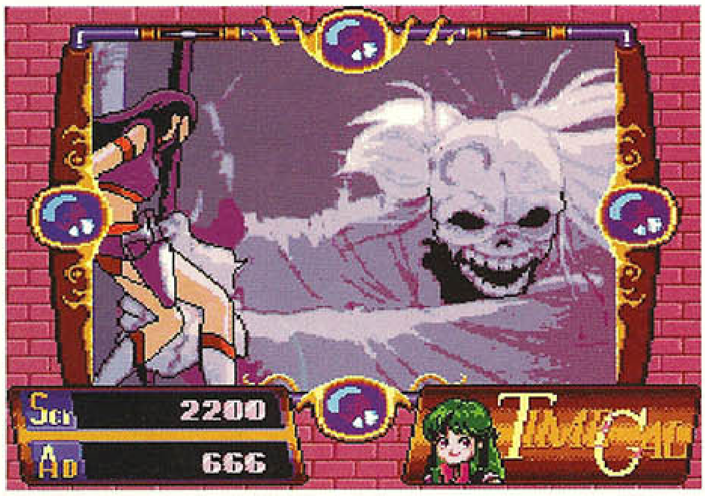
You may be thinking this is quite easy, as all you have to do is press Up, Down, Left or Right whenever the screen flashes. Well, this may be the case, but you also have the opportunity to use your gun. When all four points on the screen flash, you press button B and let fly with your laser gun. Sometimes, however, you'll freeze the action instead and be given a choice of three types of weapon to fire. Choose quickly, 'cos there's a timer counting down.

GUESS WORK

The trouble with the weapon options is that they are in Japanese text. You therefore just have to guess which weapon to use. The order also changes with every game, so you need to be careful when selecting.

There are good things and bad things about this game. The graphics and animation are indeed top quality, and the in-game soundtrack and effects (especially *Time Gal's* cute little laugh) do make the game more enjoyable to play. But if push comes to shove, I'd go for *Road Blaster FX*. It's basically the same type of game, but it's slightly better looking and more fun to play. If you've got money to burn, however, there are enough differences between the two games to warrant buying them both.

Ⓜ *Paul Mellerick*



Things are getting pretty hairy here and you're going to have to be pretty quick to get through this particular level

GET A GRIP!

Ⓐ Ⓑ Ⓒ Ⓓ Press the appropriate button when the screen flashes to execute the move

Ⓐ No function

Ⓑ Press to use your weapon or to choose an alternative weapon

Ⓒ No function

TIME GAL
タイムギャル
PUSH START BUTTON
© WOLF TEAM 1992.
LICENSED BY TAITO CORP.

PUBLISHER: Wolfteam

PRICE: £39.99

RELEASE: Out now

CARTRIDGE: Mega CD

CONTACT: Telegames 0533 516861

Just the one please!

Normal or hard: it's all about how quick your reactions are

Choose between one and four lives on the options menu

No battery back-up and no password system

Er, to be honest I don't know, but this game is big!

GRAPHICS 9
●●●●●●●●●○

SOUND 8
●●●●●●●●○○

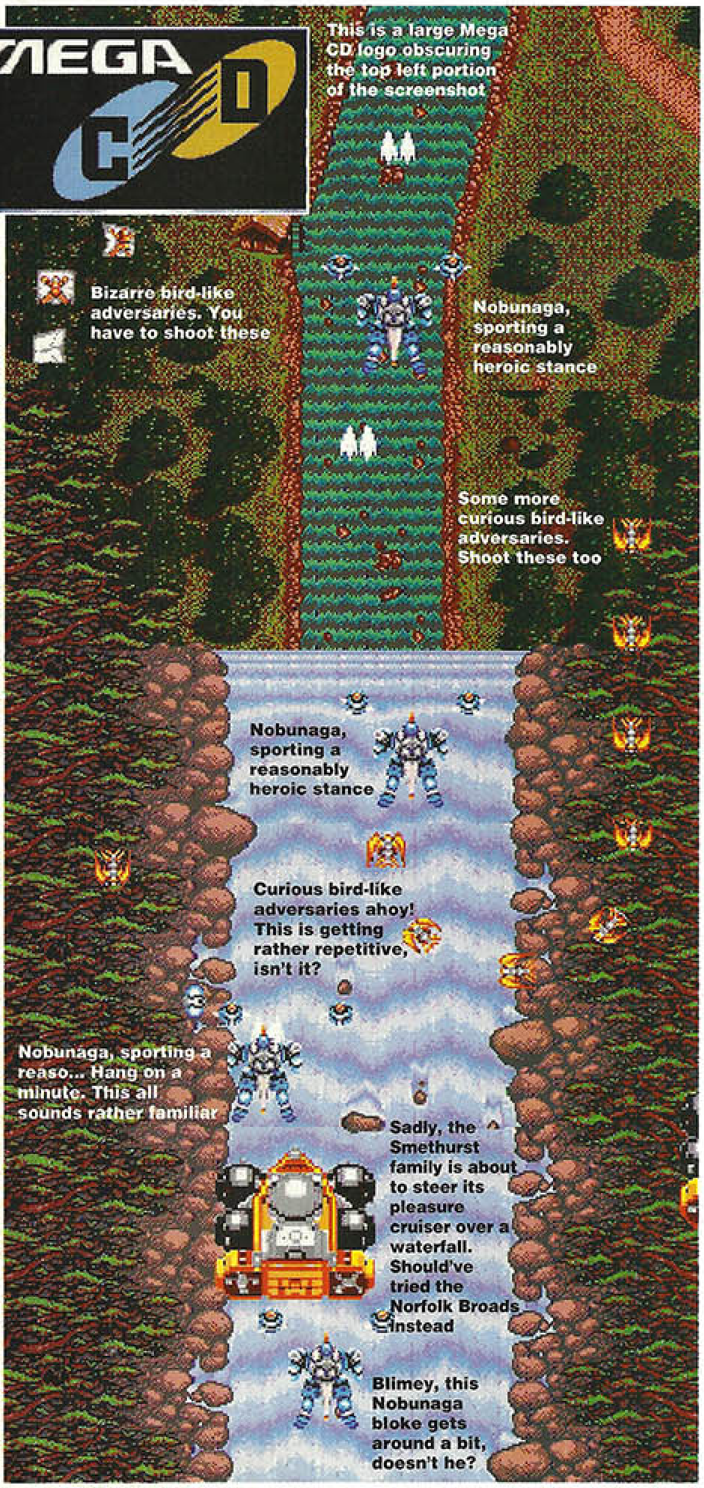
GAMEPLAY 5
●●●●●○○○○○

GAME SIZE 6
●●●●●●○○○○

ADDICTION 7
●●●●●●●○○○

"These CD games are just getting better and better. Very involving, nice looking romp, but not as blood-churningly exciting as *Road Blaster FX*"

71 PERCENT


MEGA CD
This is a large Mega CD logo obscuring the top left portion of the screenshot
Bizarre bird-like adversaries. You have to shoot these
Nobunaga, sporting a reasonably heroic stance
Some more curious bird-like adversaries. Shoot these too
Nobunaga, sporting a reasonably heroic stance
Curious bird-like adversaries ahoy! This is getting rather repetitive, isn't it?
Nobunaga, sporting a reaso... Hang on a minute. This all sounds rather familiar
Sadly, the Smethurst family is about to steer its pleasure cruiser over a waterfall. Should've tried the Norfolk Broads instead
Blimey, this Nobunaga bloke gets around a bit, doesn't he?

"At last," whispers MEGA's importer, "I've bagged you one: a top-rate Mega CD title hot from Japan. I haven't exactly seen it myself yet, but all my contacts are raving..." Neil West observes that hype springs eternal, and starts blasting...

Tenth time lucky, maybe? We've seen a fair few Mega CD games now, and without exception they've all been totally unremarkable. Oh sure, some of them were reasonable enough games in their own right, but with the possible exception of *Thunderstorm FX*, none of them looked like they couldn't have been done on an ordinary Mega Drive. We're still waiting for the game that's going to make anyone who's forked out £300 on some state-of-the-art hardware feel like they haven't just lobbed their hard cash down a big drain. Unfortunately, as far as *Nobunaga And His Ninja Force* is concerned at least, that's the way it's going to stay.

Looks like your average Mega Drive game

FROM THE TOP

Nobunaga And His Ninja Force is a vertically-scrolling shoot-'em-up. Taking place over, er, um, (hey, it's in Japanese, OK?) at *least* eight pretty hefty levels, it sees you playing a super deformed-type giant robot with a jetpack, flying over all the usual sorts of bad guy-infested scenery and, er, shooting things – up. There's a big difference between this and all the dozens and dozens of ordinary Mega Drive vertical scrollers you've seen before though, and it's that... ah. Actually, there don't appear to be any big differences between this and all the dozens of ordinary Mega Drive vertical scrollers you've seen before at all. My mistake. Sorry.

MEGA CD MOCKERY

Yep, it's the same old story again, *Nobunaga And His Ninja Force* doesn't look in the slightest like it couldn't have been produced perfectly adequately on a simple, bog-standard, everyday, run-of-the-mill sort of Mega Drive. Not only, in fact, does it look like a Mega Drive game, it also looks like a not particularly outstanding Mega Drive game. The only bit of the game which makes you go "Wow!" is one solitary moment right at the start of the game, when you fly over the top of what seems to be a waterfall and get a sudden dizzy rush of vertigo as the ground of level one appears below you.

Thereafter, the graphics are decidedly average – there are even a couple of bits that'll actually make you cringe. A few of the enemy ships which fly overhead look slightly blocky. The reason for this is that they've been scaled up, as becomes obvious when they then descend towards the ground, getting smaller as they go. It's all very (slightly) impressive, but then you don't see any more of it for the rest of the game (except in the briefest of flashes, which even if you notice them at all are so insignificant and unremarkable that it's a total waste of time anyway). It's all a bit pathetic, a bit embarrassing, a bit "Hey, never mind that fancy Nintendo stuff, kids, I can do sprite scaling as well! Look! Look!".

This is programming to prove a point, not programming to make a game, and it makes me want to go and dig a big hole in which to hide from SNES owners if this is the best the Mega CD could do.

Nobunaga And His Ninja Force is a strange game. You get only one single solitary credit for starters, but then when you get to level five you appear to be endowed with infinite continues. Strange. Then at the end of level five, you get what seems for all the world to be an end sequence, only for the game to start up again when it's finished. Every subsequent level also features one of these extended "end" sequences. It all points to one of the

NOBUNAGA AND HIS NINJA FORCE

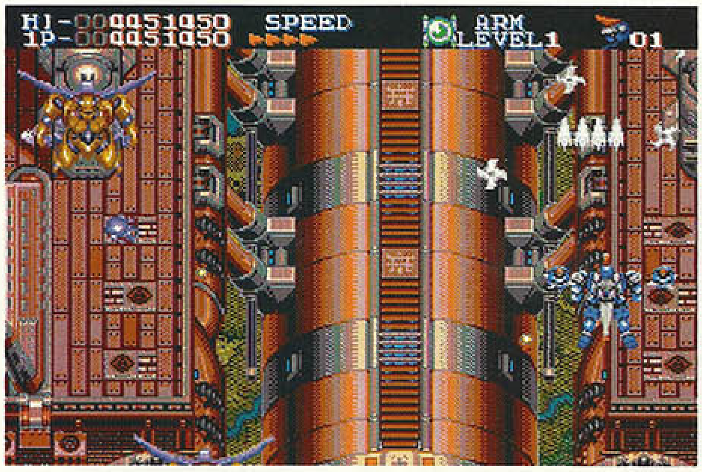
GET A GRIP!

← → ↑ ↓ Moves your robot around the screen

Ⓐ Adjusts your speed

Ⓑ Fires your selected weapon

Ⓒ Hold down to fire your drones off in a smart-bomb-ish kinda way



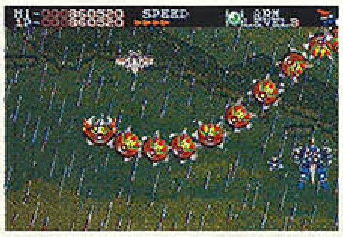
The robot who put the Nob in Nobunaga lives up to his name by letting off a volley of firepower on completely the wrong side of the screen. Oh dear!

most bizarrely-structured games I've ever played – it's almost as if it were programmed by half-a-dozen separate teams, none of whom knew exactly what the other ones were doing, and then all bolted their bits together at the last minute without anyone really paying attention.

Still, at least these animated sequences are putting the CD technology to some use. The sequences don't look like anything special, but they're accompanied by absolutely tons of lovely Japanese speech and some excellent music, all of which would have needed several Mega Drive carts worth of storage space by itself. The same goes for the in-game music, which melodically is nondescript dance beats, but technically is very impressive indeed. And while it'd certainly have been better to see the same kind of effort expended on the graphics or, even more importantly, the gameplay, there's no denying that this is a lovely game to play with the sound cranked right up to max.

SAME OLD GAME

There's something missing from this review so far, isn't there? The game. Now I could be glib at this point and say "That's because there isn't one", but that'd be overstating the point for dramatic impact, and we wouldn't want any of that. It's not that there isn't a game in here, it's just that it kind of feels that way, because there certainly isn't any kind of game that we don't already know backwards. You start playing, you collect a few power-ups, you stick the fire button down with sellotape, you switch off your brain, you mechanically dodge bullets and baddies, you automatically go "Ooh look it's the boss" in a sort of hypnotised subconscious monotone, you plough through the levels, you look at your watch, you wonder how much more of this you're going to have to sit through before you can finish it, you stick it back in the case and never have to play it again.

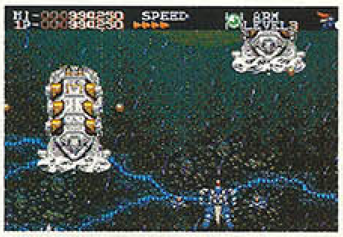


This is a big snake. As you can see it's pretty big and very, very snake-like. It's also decidedly unfriendly

Occasionally, there'll be a little bit that'll make your eyes flicker open a touch wider (like the colossal multi-sectioned ship that makes up the whole of level five), but for the most part you'll be in auto-pilot mode, yearning for a game of *King Salmon*, or anything that'll force you to do just the tiniest bit of thinking.

NEVER ENDING

We're always complaining about games being too quick to finish, but *Nobunaga And His Ninja Force* goes the other way altogether. It's not that it's at all difficult, but it goes on and on for so long without ever getting your adrenaline pumping that you begin to find yourself sighing every time you start a new level, thinking, "Oh God, let this be the last one," and that's not a healthy thing for any game.



If you're thinking, "That enemy looks a bit like a human heart", it's because you're completely mad

Now, if all this sounds a little miserable and jaded and overwrought, that's probably because I'm a lucky git who gets to play this sort of stuff all day every day, one consequence of this being that a game approaching anything near "average" begins to seem very tiresome indeed. You're probably not in the same boat, so for the average player this will be more than a perfectly respectable ordinary shoot-'em-up, rather than the suicide-inducing onslaught of tedium I'm half-accidentally making it out to be.

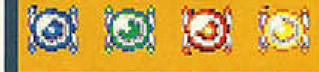
After forking out £300 for the hardware, however, don't you feel you deserve something a bit better than "average", "respectable" and "ordinary"?

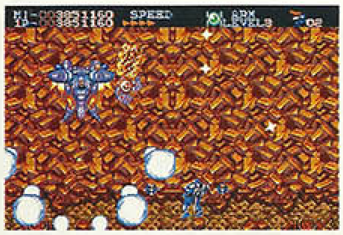
It feels like we've been banging on about this forever now, but unless things pick up pretty drastically on the Mega CD front between now and the spring, no-one's going to be interested in it by the time it is officially released in this country. It would be a shame to see one of the greatest leaps forward in video game technology since *Space Invaders* go to waste.

® *Neil West*

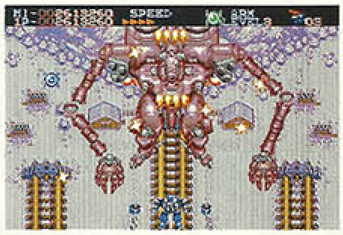
POWER UP!

There are four different weapons available in the game. By collecting the tokens below, you can obtain a weapon. Then by collecting additional tokens of the same colour, you can boost its power. Be careful though. If you have a weapon of one colour fully powered up, avoid tokens of any other colour, or you'll exchange your stonky weapon for a weedy one of another type.





The backdrops are gorgeous here, but there's precious little time to admire them. Blast that Boss, quick!



Whoa there big fella. This guardian is called BR Butt, 'cos he appears to have a train track up his bottom

©1992 COMPILE

PUBLISHER: Compile (IMPORT)

PRICE: £39.99 (CHECK WITH CONTACT)

RELEASE: Out now

CARTRIDGE: Mega CD

CONTACT: Gamesville 0293 541953

Only one player can attempt this game

Four levels of skill, from not very hard to really not very hard at all

Three lives to start with, but extra ones appear seemingly at random

No save system, but you get infinite continues after level five

Er... at least eight levels (Sorry, but the game is in Japanese!)

GRAPHICS 6

SOUND 8

GAMEPLAY 6

GAME SIZE 8

ADDICTION 5

> **"A decent enough shoot-em-up, but I can't for the life of me see where the Mega CD comes into the equation here"**

52 PERCENT

STRIDER 2

Strider was without doubt a revolutionary Mega Drive game. So how will _Strider 2_ shape up? Will it live up to expectation, or will it be just another sad sequel? Neil West had hoped for the best, but he soon realises that this game has absolutely nothing on its predecessor

It's been a long time since *Strider* first blew everyone away with its arcade-perfect graphics and stunning set-piece sequences (who could ever forget the breathtaking sprint down the side of the mountain, or the ride on the back of the terrifying mechanical snake that used to be the Soviet Politburo?).

However, a lot of water's passed under the Mega Drive bridge since then – technical achievements have reached new levels with the likes of *Thunderforce IV* and *World Of Illusion*, and platform gameplay's never been the same since a certain spiky blue dude donned his hi-tops and exploded onto the Green Hill Zone. So, a rewrite of *Strider* in this day and age would probably look, well, a bit sad really. Unfortunately (you could see this coming a mile off, couldn't you?), that's almost exactly what we've got here.

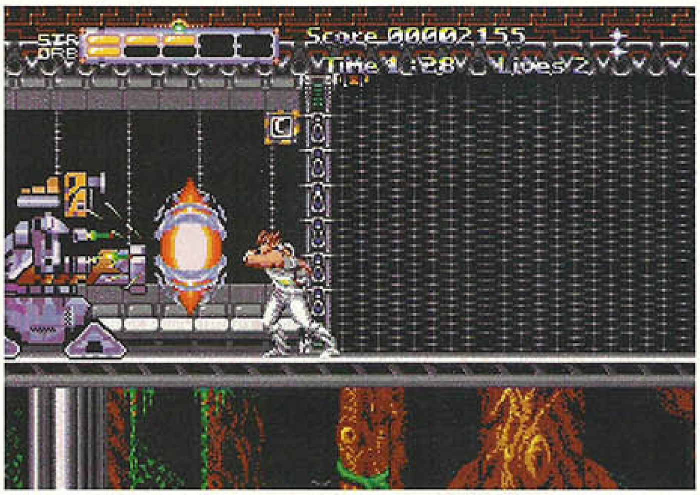
Not a patch on the original game

UNINSPIRING FIRST IMPRESSION

So, what happens when you bung this game in the old slot? Well, first up you think "Blimey, they must have been up all night doing the intro sequence, I don't think". Maybe we've been spoiled recently with Mega CD stuff like *Thunderstorm FX* and *Wonder Dog* and the like, but these days you expect a little more from a Mega Drive game than this. It's hardly important in the great scheme of things, I grant you, but when you see a game in which the programmers have not bothered with a halfway-attractive front end, you begin to wonder if they've applied the same standards to actually writing the thing.

Matters begin to look up ever-so-slightly when you bypass the pathetic excuse for an options screen and actually get into the game. Oh sure, it just looks like another generic forest scene, but the way our hero materialises onto the screen is really neat, and it lifts your hopes (albeit completely irrationally) for the two seconds that it takes before you actually start to move around...

Oh dear. Get bored halfway through doing the animation frames, did we? Strider moves along very nicely as long as you keep his feet on the ground, but launch Hiryu into the air and things all begin to go horribly wrong. The "animation" for the game's most complicated and dramatic move (the forward somersault) consists of about four separate frames, each of which glides frozen through the air for a few pixels until the program decides it's time for the next one, at which point it instantly switches. It looks like the bloody Thunderbirds on a day when the guy who is pulling the strings has had a couple of shandies too many at lunchtime. Yes, it's really that pitiful.



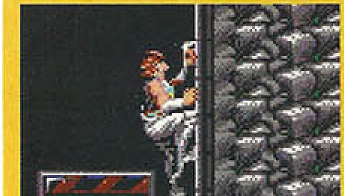
The fantastically exciting middle-of-level-one-boss – he sort of stands in the corner and you sort of hit him a lot until he explodes. Hmm... great

GOD-AWFUL GAMEPLAY

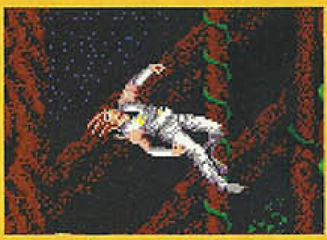
But hey, cosmetics maketh not the game, or so goes the saying which – er, I've just made up on the spot. After a couple of minutes you get used to the assault on your eyes and you stop noticing it, so it doesn't affect the gameplay – this is a bit of a pity really, as after five minutes of playing the game you begin to wish that something would. Well, that's not strictly true – you don't wish so much for something to affect the gameplay as for something to come along and introduce some. *Strider 2* has to be the most lamely-designed game we've seen here at MEGA since – well, since *Batman Returns* in the December issue, to be honest.

You wander along through mazes of platforms, every now and again a bad guy appears out of nowhere for you to hack up (although if you simply walk along continually

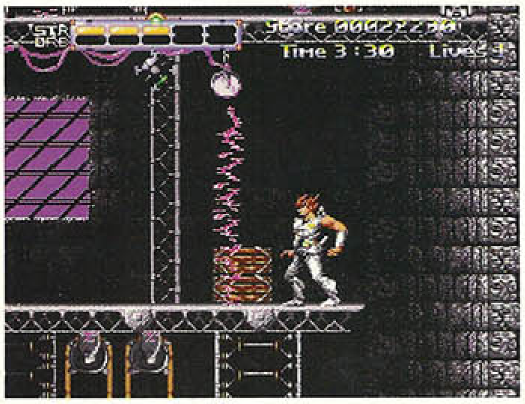
HOLDING OUT



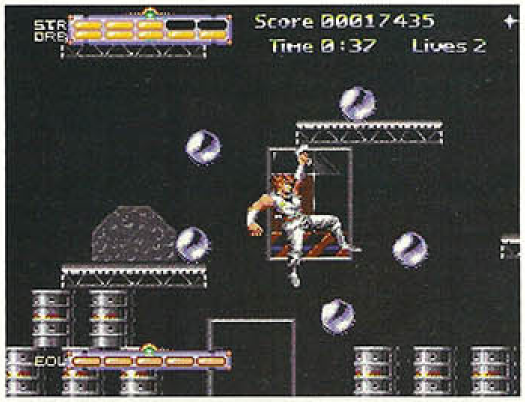
For starters, Hiryu can climb up walls. What a guy!



And now he swoons to his doom



Oh no, by my silver suit it's, er, a laser! I might as well give up right now then, I suppose



How strange. I seem to be being orbited by five small round satellites. I must, in that case, be Saturn

GET A GRIP!

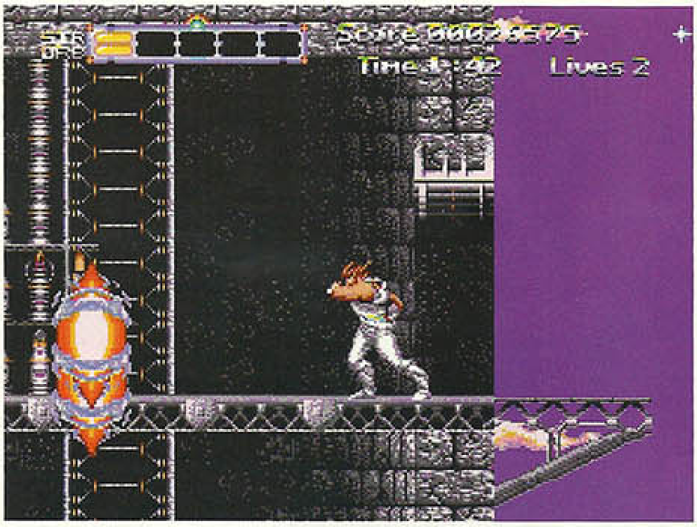
(←) (→) Moves Strider left and right

(↑) (↓) Strider crouches and climbs

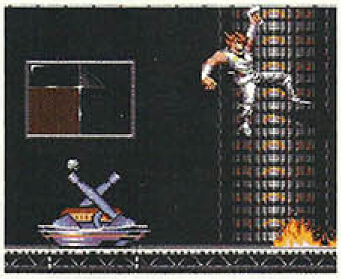
Ⓐ This, as they say, does absolutely bugger all. What a terrible waste

Ⓑ Fires your weapons (and you can choose to start with one of two types)

Ⓒ Causes your blokey to leap around in a spectacular fashion



Reaching the middle of level two, Hiryu decides he doesn't like the look of the big drop and turns tail, and legs it back the other way



After being out in the forest, Hiryu's feet were frozen, so he hung around and warmed them up for a while

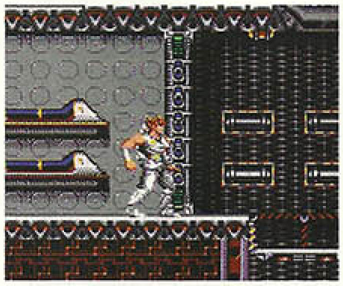
swinging your sword, you'll take care of most of the opposition before you even get a chance to see it), and occasionally, if you're really lucky, there'll be a ceiling-mounted laser or something frighteningly imaginative like that to worry about. Most of the time you're playing *Strider 2*, there's no sense of pressure whatsoever, at least not until the seemingly arbitrary time limit runs out and you inexplicably explode – the run up to such a climax doesn't half make for a boring 20 minutes (or however long you can actually be bothered to stick with it for).

EXCUSES, EXCUSES

Now of course, the wrinklies among you may well be saying at this point, "Hey, this is just a conversion of the old Amiga and ST *Strider 2*, so it's not the programmers' fault that the design sucks". Maybe not, but so what? Does it matter whose fault it is? A terrible game's a terrible game, whatever the extenuating circumstances might be. I'm sick of people making crap excuses for their games being rubbish, like "Oh yeah, it's crap, but the Mega Drive doesn't have the right kind of control pad for a decent version of *Smash TV*, so we couldn't really have done any better". If you can tell from the start that something's going to be a bad idea (like converting a really dull old computer game onto a fab and sexy console like the Mega Drive), then you just shouldn't bloody well do it, and that's that.

So what does all this leave us with? It leaves us with 40 quids worth of software that's almost completely bereft of action, thrills, or fun of any kind. It doesn't even have the saving grace of being impressive to look at. Now it wouldn't be entirely fair to say that *Strider 2* isn't pretty, but it's not a patch on the original, and three years on from that this just isn't good enough. At the end of the day, though, the visual aspect is not the important thing. The important thing is that, even if it was the most gorgeous game the world had ever seen, you still wouldn't want to play it for more than half an hour. It really is a rather dismal effort all round.

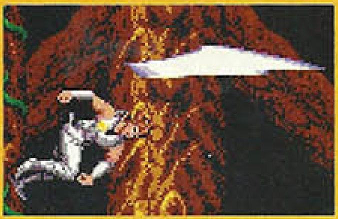
® Neil West



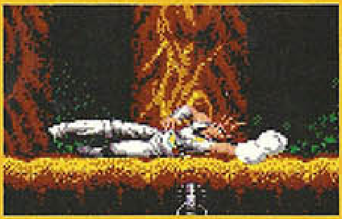
Helpfully, the bad guys include some snazzy lifts to help Hiryu on his way to his doom

FOR A HIRYU

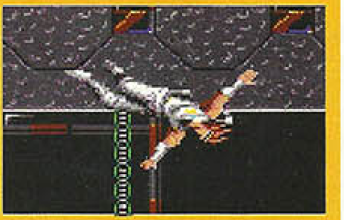
He might just be a character in a crap game, but our hero Hiryu's still one heck of an athlete. Just check out all these fab acrobatics. Don't get too excited though, because they don't do much to save the gameplay...



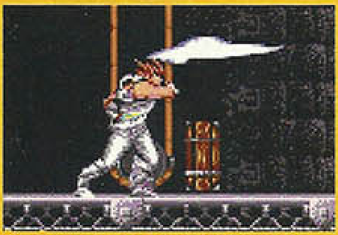
He also has the ability to somersault while swinging his sword. Coo!



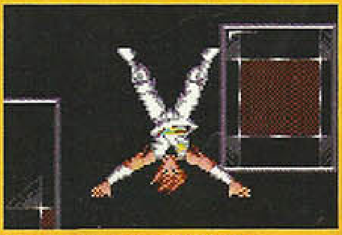
Hiryu is also very capable of being a lazy git – here he is having a lie down



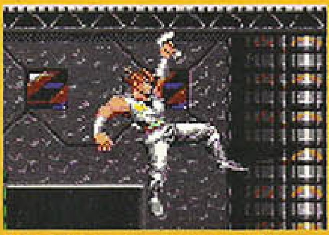
Wow, and off he goes again. This time he does a big somersault



Up again, and swinging his sword



"Look at me, I'm a starfish"



And here's our hero, er, hanging

PUBLISHER: US Gold

PRICE: £39.99

RELEASE: Out now

CARTRIDGE: 8 Mbit

CONTACT: US Gold 021 356 3388

There's no getting away from it, you play on your own in *Strider 2*

There are three skill levels: easy, normal and hard

You start with three lives and can have up to five continues

No passwords, no level codes... nowt

Five levels, but they *are* fairly sizeable

GRAPHICS 7
●●●●●●●○○○

SOUND 5
●●●●●○○○○○

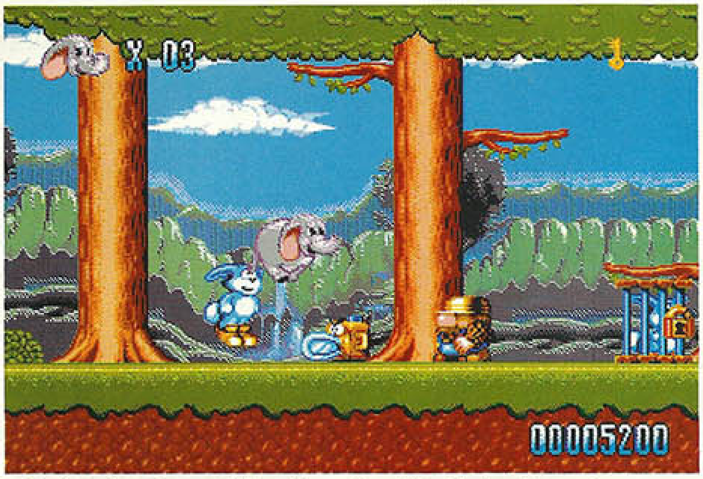
GAMEPLAY 4
●●●●○○○○○○

GAME SIZE 6
●●●●●●○○○○

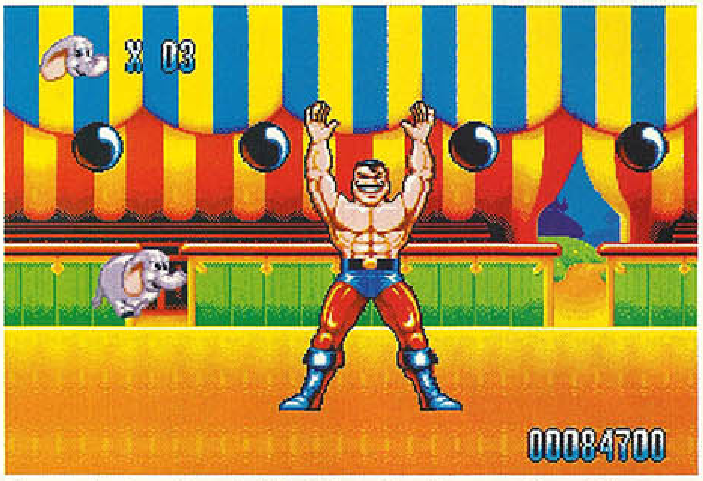
ADDICTION 3
●●●○○○○○○○

"This is basically *Strider* without the drama and imagination. Better than *Batman Returns*, but still crap"

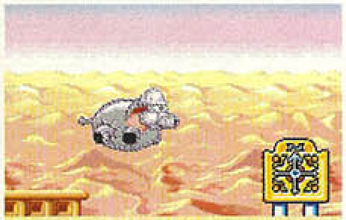
44 PERCENT



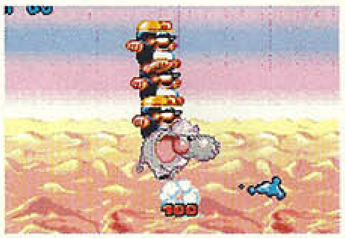
In the forest section you'll have to watch out for the lunatic woodsmen. Their chainsaws might make your eyes more than water a little



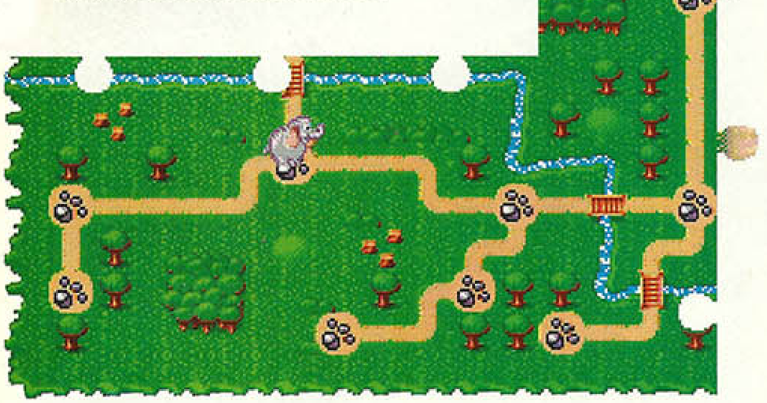
The guardian from the end of the first section. He pumps his weights so hard that the ends fall off almost squashing poor Rolo. Bounce on his head



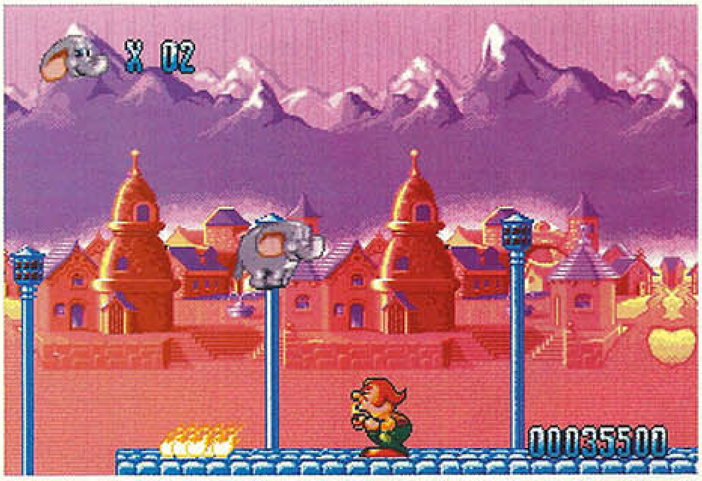
He may look like a porksome git, but collecting the helium is dead useful



One of Rolo's special moves



The map builds up as you conquer levels and collect jigsaw pieces

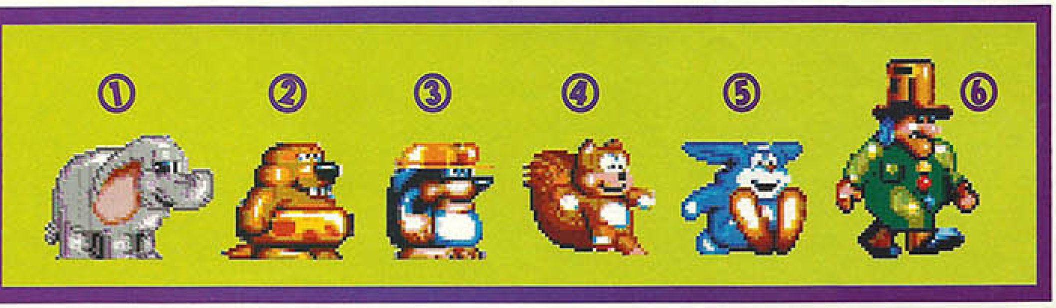


If Rolo gets past the Egyptian level, it's on to a town full of fire breathers

ROLO TO THE

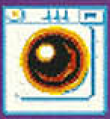
HELP AT HAND

When Rolo rescues his friends, they follow him around and can be controlled to carry out certain tasks: ① Rolo can only jump, but he's also the only one who can release trapped creatures; ② The beaver is the only one who doesn't die in water; ③ The mole can (yes, you've guessed it) dig through the earth; ④ The squirrel can climb walls; ⑤ The rabbit can jump really high; ⑥ This bloke kills on contact, but if you bounce on his head, you receive the key to your friends' cages.



OTHER STUFF

Interesting heading, huh? Given the small amount of space and the fact that this box does indeed contain "other stuff", we felt that this rather dull opening served its purpose very well.


The washer shrinks Rolo so he can get through very small gaps

The pop enables Rolo to shoot deadly bubbles

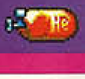
Eat the vac, and Rolo can suck up enemies

This chomping trap leaps at you. Avoid!

An extra-life token. Grab it!

Jigsaw pieces open up new bits of the map

Find their Mum and you can use them to help you


Helium helps Rolo to fly

GET A GRIP!

Ⓓ Ⓤ Ⓛ Ⓡ Makes Rolo crouch and move left and right

Ⓐ As far as I can tell, this button does less than nothing

Ⓑ Makes Rolo (and all his friends) jump into the air

Ⓒ Makes Rolo suck, moles dig, and so on – basically operates special abilities

Ⓢ Opens the options screen. From here you change characters and exit levels

A game about a cute elephant doesn't sound too exciting, does it? Surprisingly, Andy Dyer quickly warms to the idea

If Electronic Arts were promoting this as a *Mario* beater, the gamesplaying public would probably say, "Yeah, right, we've heard that before". And, of course, they'd be right to scoff. No-one's really captured whatever it is that makes those damned Nintendo platformers so playable. Fortunately, EA aren't making any such bullish claims. This is, in itself, quite chucklesome, because this game is as close to the *Mario* formula as anyone's managed to get so far.

First of all, it's big. There are over 90 levels to get through, but then there is the map screen, which enables you to reach the end without actually finishing all the levels. What's more, there are heaps of secret rooms to discover, lots of simple puzzles to solve and hidden bonuses to find. This is something which even *Sonic* (or *Sonic 2* for that matter) failed to deliver.

MARIO ON THE MEGA DRIVE?

Now, before you all start screaming bloody murder, I'm not saying that *Mario* is any better than *Sonic*. The two characters are very different and so are the games in which they appear. People have spent too much time trying to compare the two, but *Sonic's* speed and linear gameplay is as much a lure to some gamers as *Mario's* slower yet more involved style. What I'm saying is that just as Nintendo gamers would benefit from a *Sonic*-type game on their machines, so Sega gamers would doubtless be glad if a playable *Mario*-type escapade were to be made available to them. *Rolo* is indeed a good offering, but it's not quite as involved or varied as *Mario*.

Anyway, enough of all this rubbish. What's the game all about? The McSmiley twins are a pair of complete and utter gits who insist on taking control of all the zoos and circuses on the planet. They've kidnapped all the animals they could find, except, very oddly, one tiny baby elephant called Rolo. And so it's up to this tiny chap to rescue not only all the animals, but also his mother, who's one of the hostages.

The only moves that Rolo himself can perform are jumps. Oh dear. Later in the game, however, he can also find things which provide a limited amount of weaponry. For example, finding a glass of fizzy pop enables him to fire deadly bubbles at opponents, and inhaling helium makes him float. Beyond this, Rolo can also enlist the help of any animals he rescues. Once he's freed the various creatures from their cages they mimic his every move. Then, by pressing Start, you can select any one of the rescued animals and control him (or her) instead. This is not only useful, but vital for solving some of the puzzles. For example, squirrels can climb walls, rabbits can jump really high, and beavers can swim. So what we have is a platformer that requires a bit of thought as well as a good deal of dexterity.

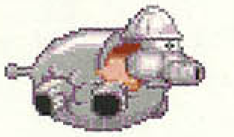
> **May end up as a Mega Drive classic!**

A GAME OF ELEPHANTINE PROPORTIONS

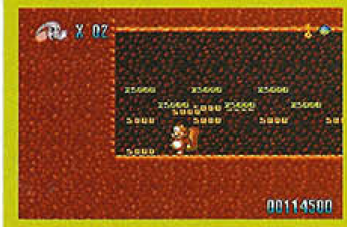
The game was coded by the same team who did *Robocod*, and while that too was a decent game, it was just a little too empty for all its vastness. Not so with Rolo. There are no sections in which you think "Oh dear, looks like the programmers ran out of ideas here". No, this improves upon the *Robocod* theme and may end up as a bit of a Mega Drive classic. It's only slightly repetitive, and other than that it's cute as hell, challenging, rather huge and, most importantly of all, it has elephantine playability.

Ⓜ *Andy Dyer*

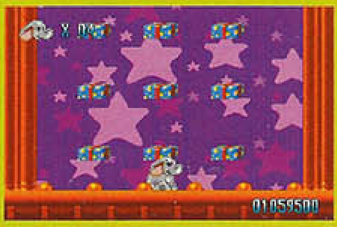
RESCUE



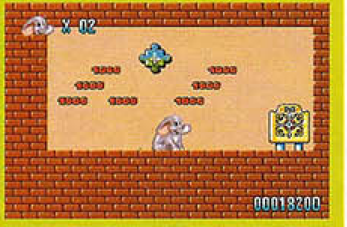
SSSHH... IT'S A SECRET!



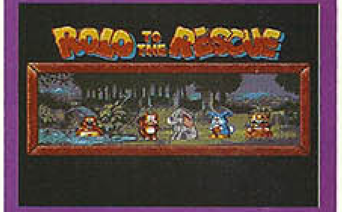
Occasionally, secret tunnels in walls lead you to a hidden treasure trove full of bonus points



Then there's this bonus game. Head-butt the correct parcels and loads of extra lives will be yours



Always explore every possibility. It's the only way you'll find all the map pieces, like this one



PUBLISHER: Electronic Arts

PRICE: £39.99

RELEASE: January '93

CARTRIDGE: 8 Mbit

CONTACT: EA 0753 549442

There's only one Rolo, but you make lots of friends along the way

Just the one skill level

Three lives and four continues

Sadly, there's no back-up or password system

Ooh, er, don't really know, but there are over 90 of them

GRAPHICS 8
●●●●●●●●○○

SOUND 7
●●●●●●●○○○

GAMEPLAY 9
●●●●●●●●●○

GAME SIZE 9
●●●●●●●●●○

ADDICTION 8
●●●●●●●●○○

> **"A superb platformer which is vast, but busy, and full of ingenious challenges"**

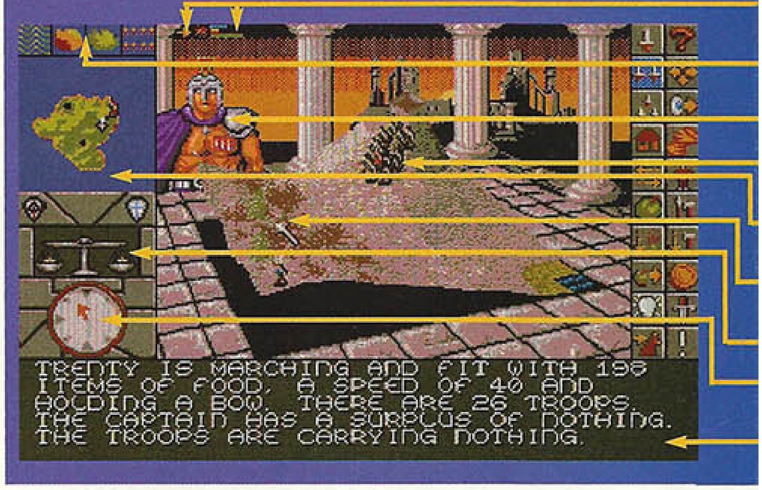
89 PERCENT

you have been defeated.

Lose a war, and some nice gentleman will come round and remove your tonsils with a broadsword. Quite how this is supposed to improve your grasp of tactics is as yet unclear, but you get the message. Not winning is a very silly – and painful – thing to do!

IT'S A SIGN

Power is information. Successful PowerMongers need to know what's going down, where and when. To this end, you're bombarded with information in the form of charts, graphs and other things you thought you'd left behind in third-year maths!



TRENTY IS MARCHING AND FIT WITH 198 ITEMS OF FOOD, A SPEED OF 40 AND HOLDING A BOW. THERE ARE 26 TROOPS. THE CAPTAIN HAS A SURPLUS OF NOTHING. THE TROOPS ARE CARRYING NOTHING.

POWERM

"Cry 'Havoc!' and let slip the dogs of war," Paul Mellerick implored. "Oh, shut up you nauseous git," replied Neil, "and get on with the review of that involving martial god sim *PowerMonger*!" "Whatever you say Captain..."

Commoners eh? Don't you just hate them? They're ungrateful, ignorant, smelly, tax avoiding gits, every man jack of them. You were ruling them as any just King would – raking in the taxes and spending the proceeds on beer – and they weren't happy. They had to go and have a revolution...

That's the situation PowerMongers find themselves in at the beginning of the game: a deposed king with only a small band of loyal followers in tow. It's now your job, as monarch, to lead them to a new promised land. At your disposal is a lone captain and his formative army. By telling your troops where and when to fight, you must conquer a continent composed of 195 islands. In "Goldrun" style you must work from the top left-hand corner of a map to the bottom right if you are to re-assert your divine right as ruler.

ISLANDS OF CHALLENGE

It's not all straightforward island hopping though, let me tell you. Each of the 195 islands poses specific tactical problems that have to be overcome using 20 different commands, a catapult you knocked together in the shed, and a handful of farmer recruits. As raw materials these hardly constitute an unstoppable war-machine, but used in the correct combination in the right situation, they just about give you a chance of capturing a new kingdom.

The battle for this isometric world is fought for you by warriors, but they'll only be effective – awake even – if you tell them exactly what to do and when to do it. You tell them by telling their Captain. And you tell the Captain what and when to do via an initially terrifying command menu.

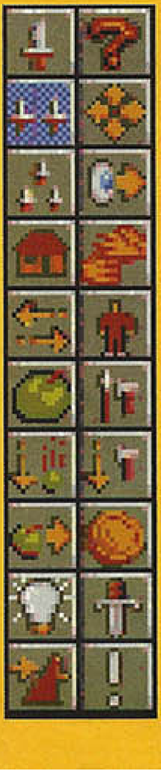
> **Don't be put off by the complex command menu**

The commands, and their specific uses, are slowly revealed by gameplay example as your campaign unfolds. Slowly, the compound effects of each action, at each aggression level, become clear. Then it's your ability to turn your troops from nice guys to nasties in an instant that determines your fate. Unfortunately, this learning curve is made steeper still by the size of the command icons. They are tiny pics and are hardly recognisable on all but the very sharpest TVs. Before long, you know intuitively where each icon is, but this graphic gripe ensures that only players who stick at it will ever see *PowerMonger* at its exceptional best.

Each island has its own geography.

ABSOLUTE POWER

... corrupts absolutely – when you know how! The world of international military violence can appear a little daunting, but with MEGA's easy-to-use, wipe-clean guide to a *PowerMonger's* potential orders, you'll never need an alliance again (almost, maybe, well, if you're lucky).



Minimum Aggression – forgiving in battle and generous with supplies

Average Aggression – reasonably humane with a hint of violence

Maximum Aggression – exterminate all the brutes, twice!

Go Home – sends your troops home; which sounds silly, but can prove useful

Transfer Men – allows you to amalgamate a number of Captains' forces

Get Food – starts your army foraging for (or stealing) some food

Drop Food – allows you to dump food for use later in the game

Supply Food – makes your Captain supply some of his grub to the locals

Invent – sends a Captain into Prof Pat Pending mode

Send Captain – tells your leader-type to move to a new location

Query – this is a most useful "help" function

Derank – disbands a Captain's army – a sort of peace dividend

Spy – what do you want? Information, and by hook or by crook we'll get it!

Alliance – allows weaker PowerMongers to kick the bigger guys

Get Men – initiates a press gang as well as local resentment

Equip Invention – shares out any wondrous new weapons you've invented

Drop Invention – a function that allows you to build weapons' dumps

Trade – a sort or arms/pots dealing option. One supergun for two clay pots

Attack – the greatest word in the English language (for psychotics)

Options – not surprisingly, takes you to the options screen

Command Bar – see the box **ABSOLUTE POWER** for full details

Captain's Current Activity – symbol reflect that Captain's current orders

Captain Status – shows the amount of food and troops a Captain possesses

Map Mode – switch the map from contour, objects, food and settlements

Your Captain – bad news if he's killed

Recruited Captains – their forces are slow to respond

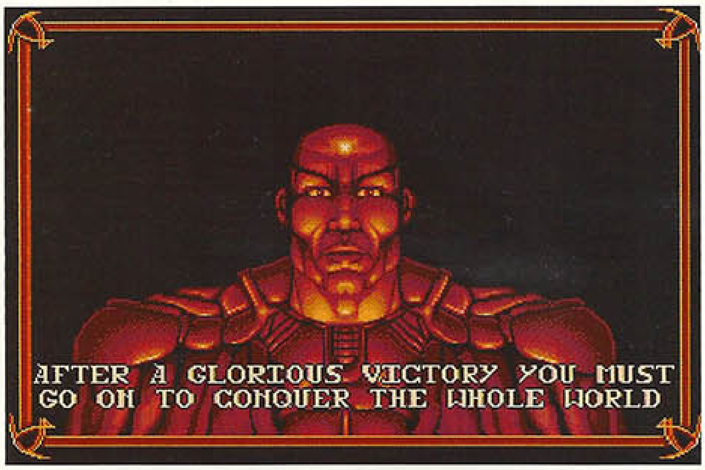
Island Map – click here to view any part of the island

Control Cursor – how you tell your men where to fight (and die)

Scales – current balance of power

Clockface – shows the relative direction of the island

Text Window – weird looking writing, but the information is vital



AFTER A GLORIOUS VICTORY YOU MUST GO ON TO CONQUER THE WHOLE WORLD

Would you buy a used car from this man? Would you believe him if he told you that he was on your side? Well luckily, he is, and he is the lackey who reports victory. So as Jimmy Carter once said, "he may be a bast' but he's our bast'". Surely that can only be a plus point?

ONGER

Some are rich with mines that allow city-busting cannons to be created, others are separated by vast lakes that must be traversed by boat. But these cannot be built unless the right raw materials and workshops can be taken, and the correct aggression setting chosen.

INTIMATE TACTICS

PowerMonger is a battle for hearts and minds as much as territorial possession. The first few islands can be stormed by just collecting troops, food and weapons on the most merciless setting. Then the true game appears in the shape of the people you're conquering. Every person on every island has a name, history and loyalty rating. If the warlord you're currently fighting has stolen a character's food, killed their sheep, or press-ganged their men-folk, then their resentment can be turned to your advantage. Desperate lords will have to make desperate calls, but those who look after their locals will have a longer, more powerful life.

These characteristics make the tight battle for the balance of power an intriguing, if not exactly exciting, struggle. *PowerMonger* hides its gameplay potential behind a mask of fancy graphics and quirky humour. It looks like a god game and sounds like a war game, but in reality it's just a management sim with a sophisticated graphic interface. The decisions it forces you to make and the graphic illustration of their implications, are challenging and highly entertaining. The inter-relation of certain gaming elements is never fully defined, but the more you play, the greater your tactical abilities and strategic intuition become. The later islands are struggles that last for hours, and this guarantees that this game has massive staying power.

Many folk may be put off by *PowerMonger's* slow pace, the long games and low gore count. The heavy controls and hard-to-read graphics don't help much either, but anybody who's brave enough to face one of the biggest and most audaciously different games yet seen on the Mega Drive, is in for a brilliantly desperate battle.

® *Paul Mellerick*

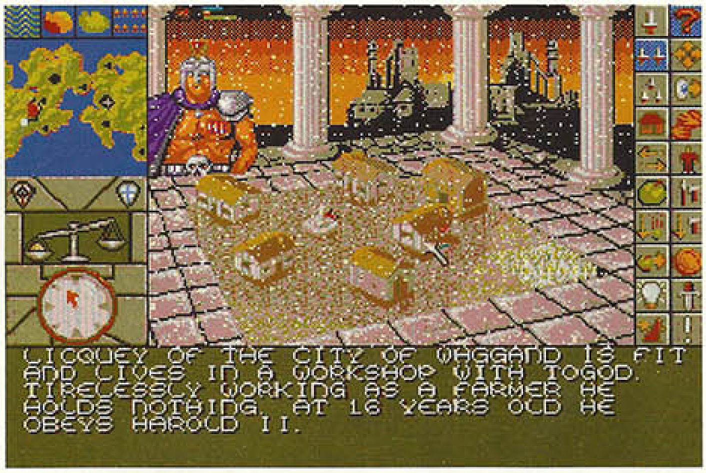
GET A GRIP!

Ⓤ Ⓓ Ⓛ Ⓡ Scrolls map and moves cursor

Ⓐ Initiates action or order, controls map and identifies objects/people

Ⓑ Switches between windows

Ⓒ Selects control bar or selects main game window



LICQUEY OF THE CITY OF WAGGAND IS FIT AND LIVES IN A WORKSHOP WITH TOGOD. TIRELESSLY WORKING AS A FARMER HE HOLDS NOTHING. AT 16 YEARS OLD HE OBEYS HAROLD II.

Onto every life a little rain must fall, well it's snow actually, but it's the same difference. The climate's affect on the ability of your troops to fight and kill is one of *PowerMonger's* many secrets. Regardless of the implications though, it does make for seasonally scenic slaughter

Power Monger
PRESS START
Licensed by Sega Enterprises Ltd

PUBLISHER: Electronic Arts

PRICE: £39.99

RELEASE: Out now

CARTRIDGE: 8 Mbit

CONTACT: EA 0753 539442

Monotheistic

Each new island is that bit harder to conquer

Just keep grinding away until you capture the next island

Passcode immortality

195 different lands to conquer, pillage and generally invade

GRAPHICS ●●●●●○○○○○	**5**
SOUND ●●●●●○○○○○	**5**
GAMEPLAY ●●●●●●●●●○	**9**
GAME SIZE ●●●●●●●●●●	**10**
ADDICTION ●●●●●●●○○○	**7**

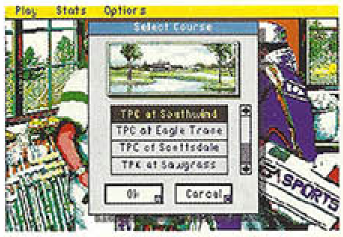
"If you've got the time and the patience to get to grips with this game, you'll come away more than satisfied"

81

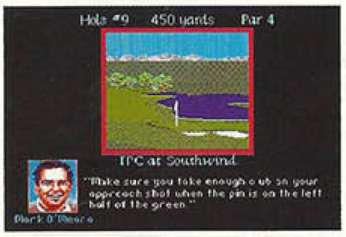
PERCENT

PGA TOUR GOLF II

Those guys at EASN do it again with another ripping sequel. Neil West finds he's on a fairway to heaven...

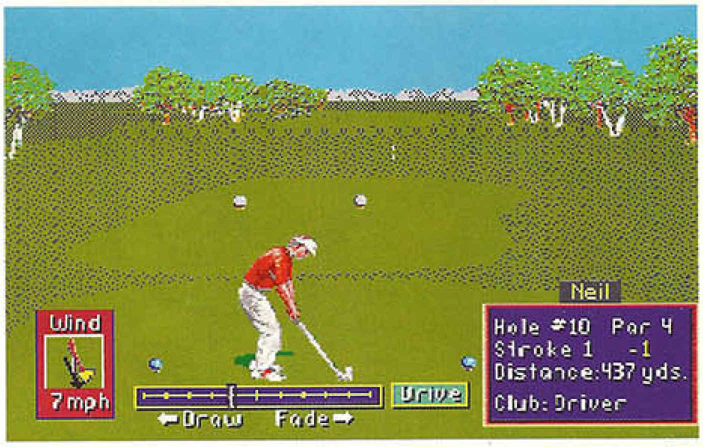


There are now seven courses to choose from, so swing into action



"Make sure you take enough club on your approach shot when the pin is on the left half of the green."

Hey, like thanks from Mark. That's Mr O'Meara to you lot



Hole #10 Par 4
Stroke 1 -1
Distance:437 yds.
Club: Driver

The new draw/fade feature in ***PGA Tour Golf II*** enables you to bend the ball round corners – very handy when there's a barking great tree in your way

You don't have to wear flares and roll-neck sweaters to like playing golf, you know; nor do you need to spend £500 on a set of spanking Ping Eye 2 Dynamic Gold persimmon clubs; nor do you need to spend half your life learning to play and the other half on the practice ground trying to work out why the ball won't fly straight. All you need to do is bang *PGA Tour Golf II* in your Mega Drive and there you are.

What follows is hour after hour of enjoyment playing against the top US pros, with the added advantages that you don't have to wear gruesome diamond socks or get out of your chair. The only downer is that the prize money's not real, but then let's face it, you've got about as much chance of making it to the top in professional golf as you have of winning the pools.

AWESOME ORIGINAL

The original game was the best Mega Drive golf game ever. It offered easy controls, a wide variety of options and plenty of stats, but best of all it gave you and your mates the tantalising chance to pit your skills against the best American pros: Tom Kite, Paul Azinger, Fuzzy Zoeller, Raymond Floyd – you've seen them on TV in the Ryder Cup, and now's your chance to push their faces in a bunker and make them eat dirt for all that whingeing and whining they do when they lose. *PGA Tour Golf* created an unparalleled competitive atmosphere that kept you glued in front of the game from one hour to the next.

The control system was simple – aim in the direction in which you wanted to hit the ball, and then three clicks of the button sent it greenwards (or not): one press started your swing, one set the power, and one made the ball go straight. If you got the whole procedure right, you were rewarded with a beautifully sweet and straight shot, or even a round of applause and an impromptu replay.

If you got it all horribly wrong, however, the ball swung sickeningly towards the rough, towards a bunker, or even into a lake. When you were leading the field by a single shot, the game soon became extremely tense. One mistake was all it took to see your name tumble from the leader board, so you had to concentrate, and concentrate hard. And when you'd got the pros licked, there was endless fun to be had playing against up to three of your friends.

THE SAME AND MORE

PGA Tour Golf II retains the basic competitive fervour of the original, and adds several refinements to improve the game's slickness and all-round playability. The most obvious difference from the original is visual: the graphics have been improved all round.

The holes have a more meaty 3D feel, the trees look great and your player looks much more convincing as he swings smoothly to hit the ball. And speaking of swinging, there's a new option that enables you to play a draw (bend the ball deliberately to the left) or a fade (bend it deliberately to the right). So, if your path to the pin is blocked out by a clump of trees, bend the ball around them. It's a great feeling to see the ball curve in the air, to know that it's going exactly how you planned, and then to see it drop snugly next to the pin.

MORE COURSES AND AN EXTRA GAME FORMAT

Next up there are seven courses – the original four plus three more. All of them are typically American, with vast lakes, huge bunkers (sorry, sand traps) and tiny greens. You can play round each in practice mode or in tournaments against the combined might of the American PGA. There's also a new game format to test you out. Skins is played for money hole by hole against one other player, rather than playing a complete round as you do in tournaments. So if you bodge up one hole, it doesn't ruin the score for the hole round. This makes for exciting matches when playing against a friend – call it a pint a hole and you're on for a steaming evening's entertainment.

JUST BROWSING

There's also a new hole browser that gives you a 3D view of the hole. It's useful for seeing round corners, but you can quite happily get along without it. Detailed stats let you keep track of how you're playing, so you know which parts of your game are letting you down. If you're really keen, you can go to the practice ground to iron out the wrinkles, but I'd sooner play a proper round than spend an hour or two practising.

And there you have it, the best golf game gets bigger and better. Unless you're a massive golf fan, or have shares in EA, you won't need this if you've already got the original. But if you haven't got a golf game, this one's a must. Great graphics, good sound effects and finely tuned gameplay combine to make this one of the best sports sims around.

Neil West

PLAY TO WIN

It's not the winning that counts, it's the taking part. What a load of rubbish. Only losers believe in that sort of tosh, so get stuck into the opposition and make sure you win – there are prizes and pride at stake. Bibliophiles might like to root out an old book called Gamesmanship by Stephen Potter. It tells you how to win all manner of games (including golf) without actually being any good at them, and without actually cheating. It was written about 50 years ago, so it won't help much with golf on the Mega Drive.

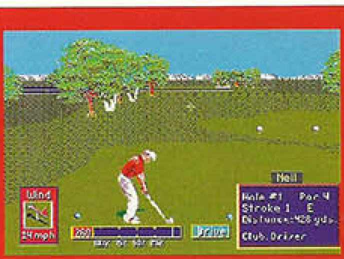
Play
Stats
Options

Welcome to The Fed Ex St. Jude Classic at TPC at Southwind

Total purse: $1,467,000

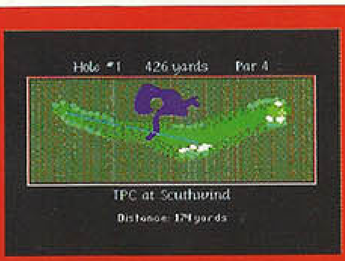
Prepare to start Round 1

We're talking big bucks here, so there's no room for losers



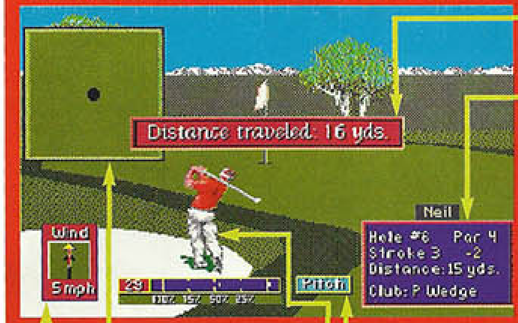
Hole #1 Par 4
Stroke 1 E
Distance:428 yds.
Club: Driver

On the first tee and that lake looks a bit ominous. Better safe than sorry...



So check out the overhead. Drive down the right, but mind the bunkers

WHAT IT ALL MEANS


Distance traveled: 16 yds.

Neil
Hole #6 Par 4
Stroke 3 -2
Distance: 15 yds.
Club: P Wedge

Tells you how far the last shot went

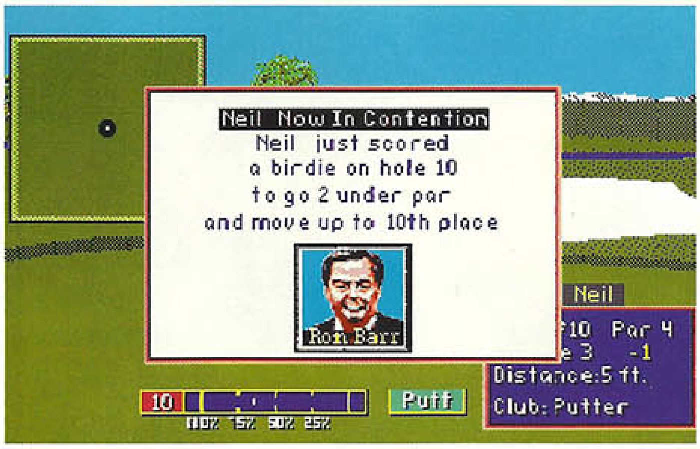
The information box tells you the number and par of the hole, how far there is to go, which club you're using and how many strokes you've taken on that hole

The type of shot is shown here. Choose from normal, pitch, chip, fringe putt and putt

Wind speed direction

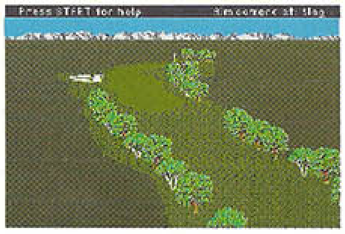
Get excited when the ball appears in the close up, it means it might go in

That's you that is

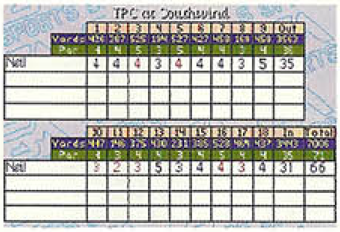

Neil Now In Contention
Neil just scored a birdie on hole 10 to go 2 under par and move up to 10th place

Neil
#10 Par 4
Stroke 3 -1
Distance: 5 ft.
Club: Putter

Ron adds to all the excitement by keeping you informed when things change



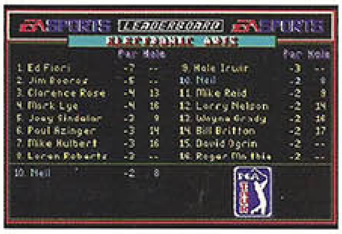
The new hole browser gives you a detailed 3D look at the hole, but you don't really need to use it


TPC at Southwind

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Out
Yards	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Par	4	4	5	3	5	4	4	3	4	36
Neil	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	3	5	35

	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	In	Total
Yards	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Par	4	3	4	4	3	4	5	4	4	35	71
Neil	3	2	3	5	3	4	4	3	4	31	66

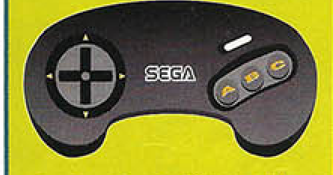
The score-card. Red figures are birdies, black ones are bogies


EA SPORTS LEADERBOARD EA SPORTS
ELECTRONIC ARTS

	Par	Hole		Par	Hole
1. Ed Fiori	-7	--	9. Hale Irwin	-3	--
2. Jim Booros	-6	--	10. Neil	-2	8
3. Clarence Rose	-4	13	11. Mike Reid	-2	9
4. Mark Lye	-4	16	12. Larry Nelson	-2	14
5. Joey Sindelar	-3	9	13. Wayne Grady	-2	16
6. Paul Azinger	-3	14	14. Bill Britton	-2	17
7. Mike Hulbert	-3	16	15. David Ogrin	-2	--
8. Loren Roberts	-3	--	16. Roger Maltbie	-2	--
10. Neil	-2	8			

Two under after eight isn't bad, but I finished this round five under in second place. No, honest, I did

GET A GRIP!

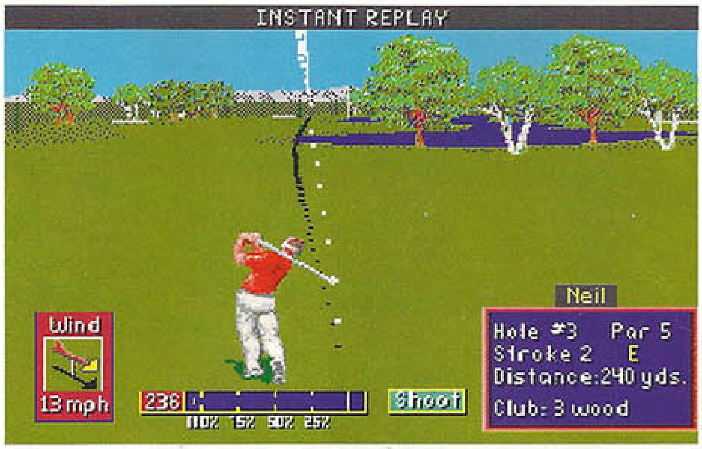


◀ ▶ ▲ ▼ Aims your shot, chooses your club and selects the menu options

Ⓐ Selects menu options and displays overhead view, ball lie and green grid

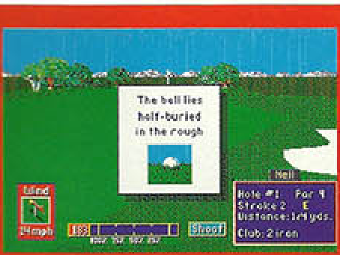
Ⓑ Press three times to play your shot

Ⓒ Cancels menu option and enables you to set up a draw or fade


INSTANT REPLAY

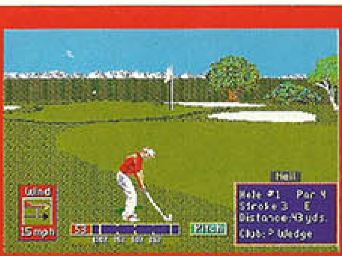
Neil
Hole #3 Par 5
Stroke 2 E
Distance: 240 yds.
Club: 3 wood

Play a great shot and you get an automatic instant replay. Here, the ball is faded from left to right with devastating results – pin high in two on a par 5

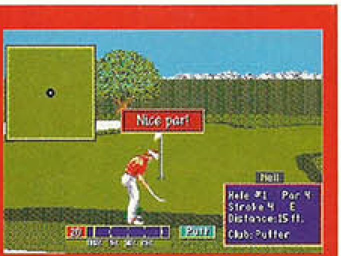

The ball lies half-buried in the rough

Neil
Hole #1 Par 4
Stroke 2 E
Distance: 124 yds.
Club: 2 iron

The ball catches the rough, and you lose distance on the next shot

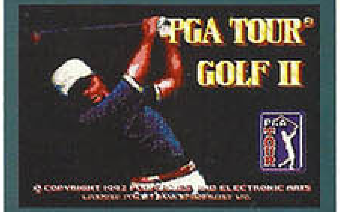

Neil
Hole #1 Par 4
Stroke 3 E
Distance: 43 yds.
Club: P Wedge

43 yards short and still in the rough. Got to get down in two from here


Nice par!

Neil
Hole #1 Par 4
Stroke 4 E
Distance: 15 ft.
Club: Putter

A decent pitch leaves it 15 feet away. Roll the putt in to save par



PUBLISHER: Electronic Arts

PRICE: £44.99

RELEASE: February '93

CARTRIDGE: 8 Mbit

CONTACT: EA 0753 549442

Between one and four players can club it out

There are both amateur and professional tees

What's going to happen? You gonna get killed by a golf ball?

Battery backed, so you can save your position in a tournament

There are seven lush courses

GRAPHICS	8
●●●●●●●●○○	
SOUND	8
●●●●●●●●○○	
GAMEPLAY	9
●●●●●●●●●○	
GAME SIZE	8
●●●●●●●●○○	
ADDICTION	9
●●●●●●●●●○	

"The best Mega Drive golf game and possibly the best post-pub game *ever* just got even better"

91 PERCENT

Andy Dyer decides to help out the whole of mankind and discovers that a spear in the hand is worth two up the bottom (or something along those lines). Time for some evolutionary fun

Evolution always was, and always will be, a right pain in the butt. Let's face it, for years mankind had to suffer rather unpleasant meals like runny eggs, raw sausages and frozen McCain oven chips. Then, of course, we discovered fire... Hoo-bloody-rah – nice piping hot meals. But what about protecting your wife, kids and home from vicious prehistoric beasts? Before weapons were discovered, the caveman's only defence was shouting, "I say, you can't do that. Remove your teeth from my child's skull at once you cad," while waving a fern frond menacingly at the attackers. Crap!

Needless to say, however, we soon discovered how to create weapons like the flint knife, spear and Uzi 9 mm and everyone was then happily able to fend off the attacks of animals, rival tribes and Salvation Army campaigners. Brill! So then, things came on apace until, eventually, we developed into the civilised, peace-loving, successful, affluent people that we are today. Erm...

Anyway, the fact is that all this evolution lark and discovery business actually makes a pretty good basis for a Mega Drive game, and here it is.

> **Not as compulsive as *Lemmings*, but a damn fine game in its own right**

The Humans has, gameplay-wise, borrowed fairly heavily from the *Lemmings* theme. Although the humans in question are entirely under your control, you still have to get them to perform various tasks to overcome platform-related obstacles and hazards.

At the start of the game the puzzles are very simple indeed. All you really need to do is get a few humans together, get

GET A GRIP!

ⓔ ➡ ⬆ ⬇ Move left, right and crouch

Ⓐ Flicks between the different humans for you to control and use

Ⓑ Picks up, drops, and uses any items you've collected and selected

Ⓒ Selects the way in which you wish to use an item you're holding

THE HUM

THE DISCOVERY OF FIRE...

... But the question is, who the hell put it there in the first place? I mean, I ask you, I find it highly unlikely that man just wandered through the forest and happened across a ready-made, here's-one-I-prepared-earlier torch. Well, according to this game, that's exactly how it happened, so let's take a look at exactly how you go about finding it.

① Grab yourself a spear and pole-vault all of your humans across the little watery gap.

② Throw the spear (timing your throw accurately) and blat the dinosaur with it.

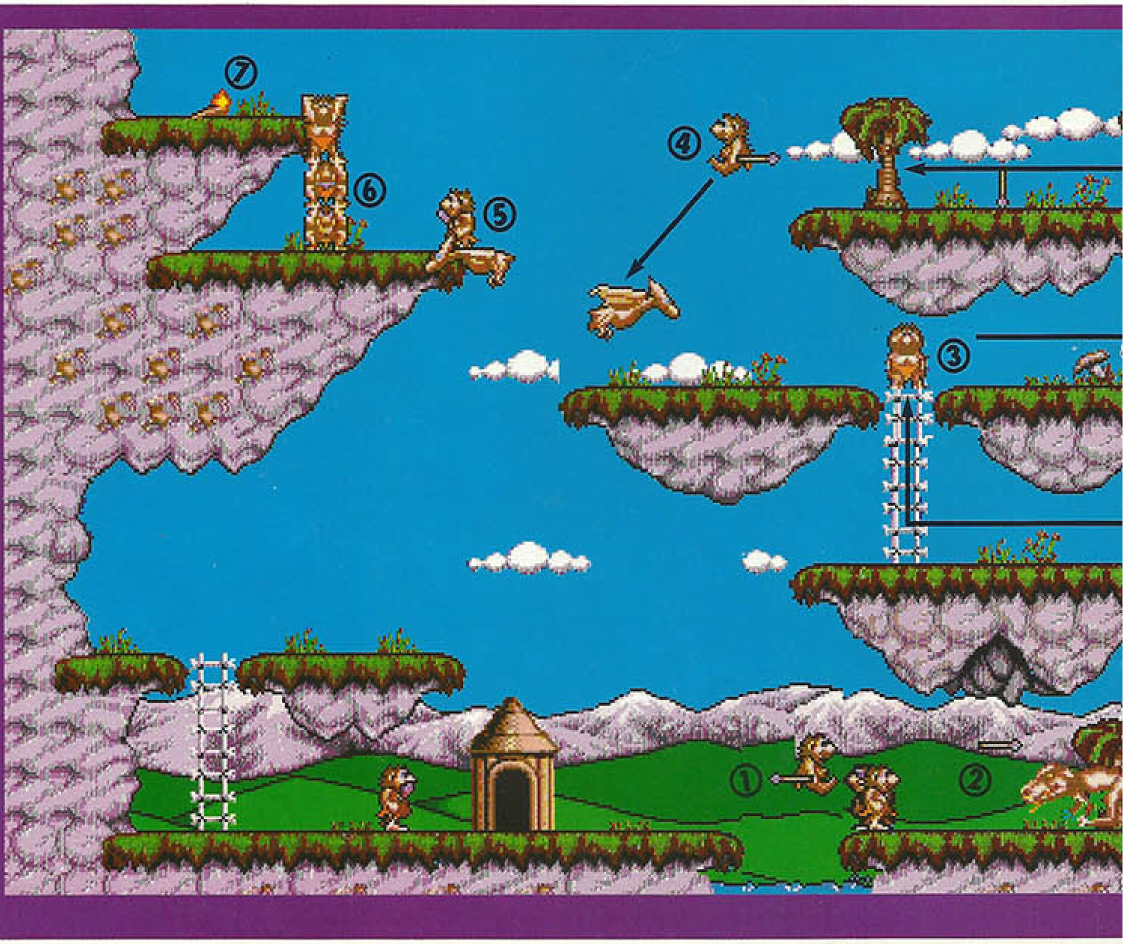
③ One by one, get all your bearded brethren up to the top platform, where the second spear resides.

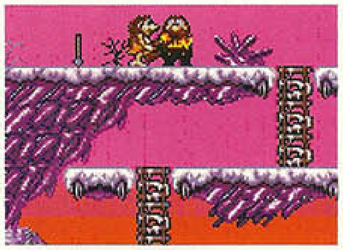
④ This time (and this is right good), use the spear to pole-vault your pre-historic pals onto the back of the circling pterodactyl.

⑤ Wait until the bizarre bird-thing passes over the platform on the left, and simply walk off.

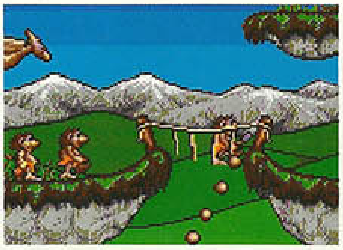
⑥ Perform a mind-boggling balancing act with all the humans so that the final one can climb up and reach the top platform.

⑦ There it is, the mysterious burning torch. No one knows where it came from, but quite frankly, who cares? If it means not having to eat raw brontosaurus bladders any more, then I'm all for it. Job, as they say, done.

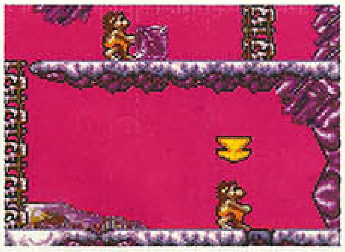




Discovering fire is all very well, but early torches didn't carry a "Do not light your friends" warning on them



Beware the collapsing bridge. Once it's fallen, you'll need to use the spear to get your chums across



The bloke under the arrow is about to activate a switch which will remove that blockage at the top

them to stand on top of each other so that they can get over tall obstacles, and reach the exit before your time runs out. You only ever have to get one human to the exit to complete a level, so all the others humans who appear on the screen are used only in a puzzle-solving capacity. So, in fact, as long as you keep enough humans alive to complete the puzzles, it doesn't matter if a few die along the way. But don't get too complacent in these early stages, because things change pretty fast.

INVOLVING GAMEPLAY

As you get further into the game the challenges get a lot harder and, unfortunately, the time limits don't get any kinder (well, not much anyway). What's more, the humans at your disposal get less, erm, dispensable. Whereas before you could afford to go at it like a bull in a china shop, now you have to do everything possible to keep all your friends alive or you'll just end up getting stuck.

Later on, you have to find and then use spears and torches. Wave them around, throw them or (in the case of the spears) use them as pole vaulting, er, poles to, um, vault over gaps. Add to this the introduction of monsters, enemy cavemen, collapsing bridges and pressure-activated walls and obstacles, and the whole thing starts shaping up to be quite an involved little experience.

UNDER INDIVIDUAL INSTRUCTION

This however is where the trouble begins. In *Lemmings* (sorry to keep comparing them, but it's the closest comparison I could think of) you don't actually control the movement of the main characters; they just keep on moving relentlessly and so, ultimately, reach their destination of their own accord. This speeds up what could have been a mind-numbingly slow-paced puzzle game.

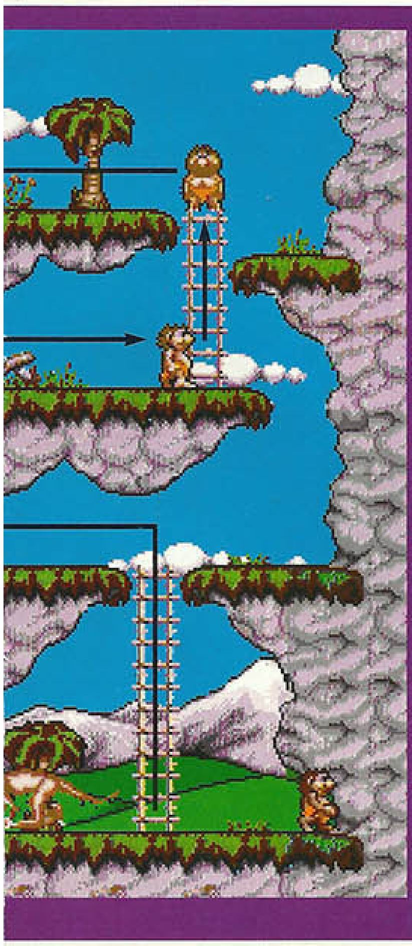
Sadly, in *The Humans* you have to control the movement of the characters manually and individually. If only one or two of the little chaps were needed for each puzzle, this would be fine, but later in the game you'll need to manipulate six or seven of the lumbering little gits to achieve your goal. What's more, quite often you have to move all of them right the way across the play area to perform one task, only to have to move the cheesy little bleeders all the way back again to the exit. This is all fine and dandy for the first few attempts, but on particularly complex levels you'll get incredibly racked off after about your fifth attempt.

SAVED BY THE PASSWORD SYSTEM

This one failing makes *The Humans* a somewhat poorer relative of *Lemmings*. But, even though it's not quite up to the standard of that Psygnosis classic, it's still a damn fine game in its own right. The slow progress on later levels is annoying, but fortunately, the inclusion of a good password system just saves it from being annoying enough to put you off playing it. If you liked *Lemmings*, and you're a fan of more cerebral Mega Drive games, then *The Humans* is well worth a look. It's cute, colourful and very, very playable.

Andy Dyer

ANS



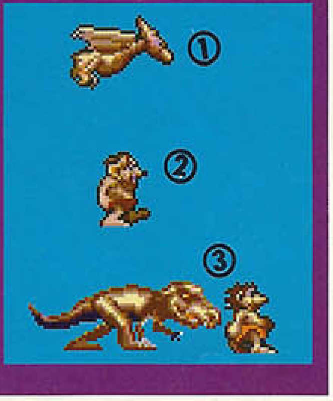
THREE WAYS TO BUY IT

There are, of course, more than three ways to die, but here are just a few of the things to look out for to get you on your way.

① These guys are a pain in the bum. They flap around all over the the place and then expect you to hitch a ride on their backs.

② These chaps are a bit unsavoury too. Watch out, or they'll throw a long pointy stick at you and laugh in your face.

③ These T-rex blokies are very dim and pace up and down a lot. You can't kill them just by waving a spear at 'em though. You have to throw in onto the tops of their heads. A good aim and expert timing are essential.



INTRODUCING
THE HUMANS

PUBLISHER: Imagitec

PRICE: £39.99

RELEASE: March '93

CARTRIDGE: 4 Mbit

CONTACT: Imagitec 0924 461115

One player, but you get to control loads of humans

Three skill levels, which you select at the start of the game

The number of lives you have depends on the level you're playing

An excellent password system saves the day. Hurrah!

You have a huge 80 levels through which to evolve

GRAPHICS 8

SOUND 7

GAMEPLAY 8

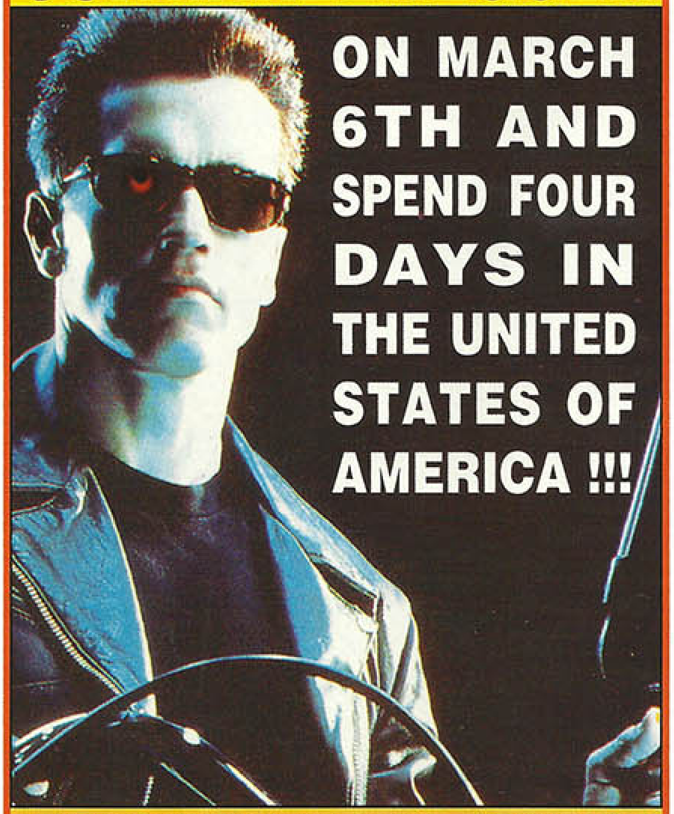
GAME SIZE 8

ADDICTION 7

> **"Not quite *Lemmings*, but pretty close. It's slightly repetitive, but fans of this style of game certainly won't be disappointed"**

81 PERCENT

MEET ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER



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Phone and answer five questions and you and a friend could be rubbing shoulders with

THE TERMINATOR!!!

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Q1 What professional sport did Arnold Schwarzenegger previously compete in?
A - Body Building B - Darts C - Golf
Q2 What was Arnold Schwarzenegger's last film release?
A - Conan The Barbarian B - Commando C - Terminator 2
Q3 Who played Arnold Schwarzenegger's twin brother in the film Twins?
A - Gazza B - Rolf Harris C - Danny Devito
Q4 In the film Total Recall what planet did Arnold Schwarzenegger liberate?
A - The Moon B - The Sun C - Mars
Q5 In the film Terminator what role did Arnold Schwarzenegger play?
A - Policeman B - Traffic Warden C - Terminator

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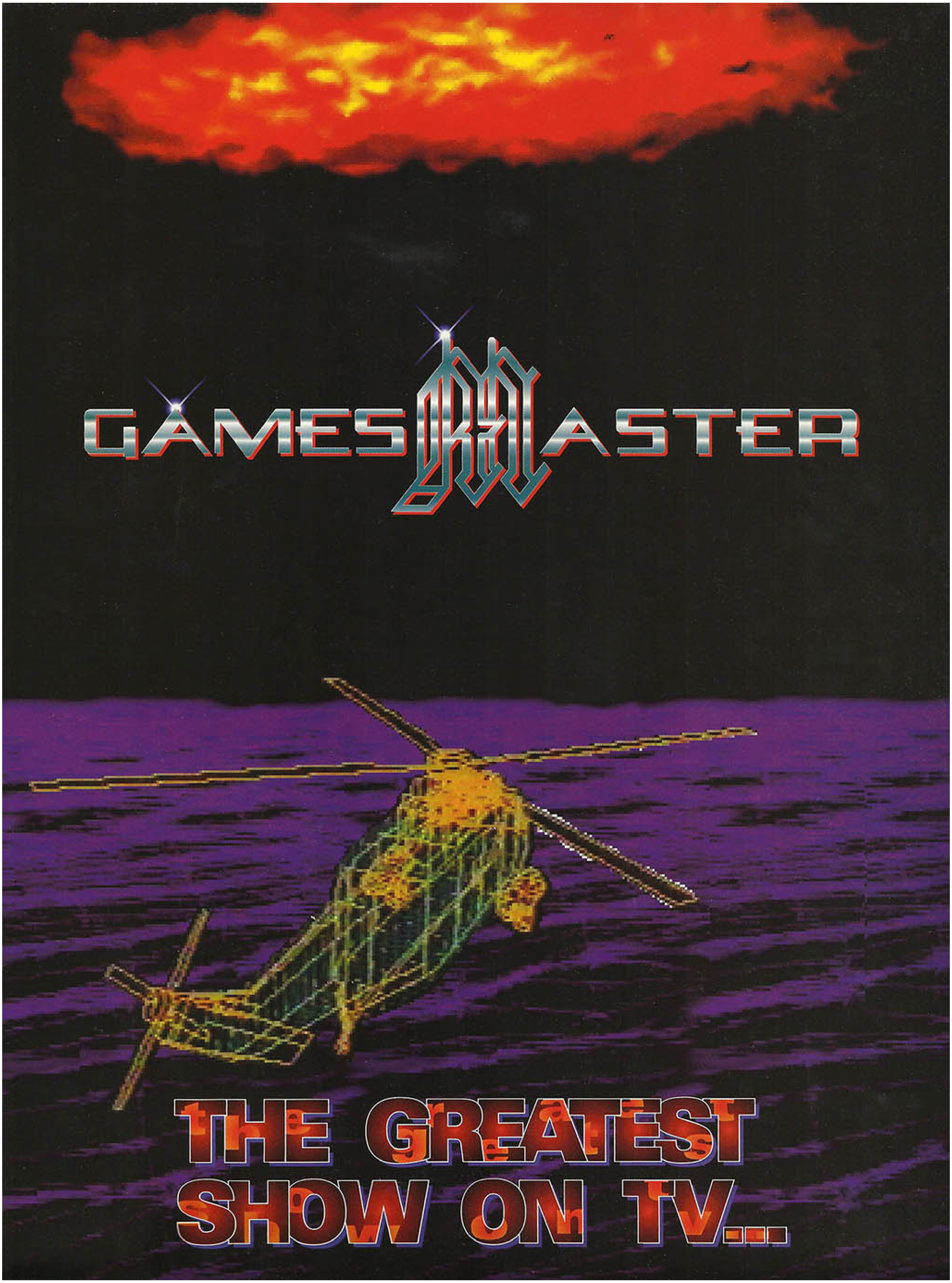
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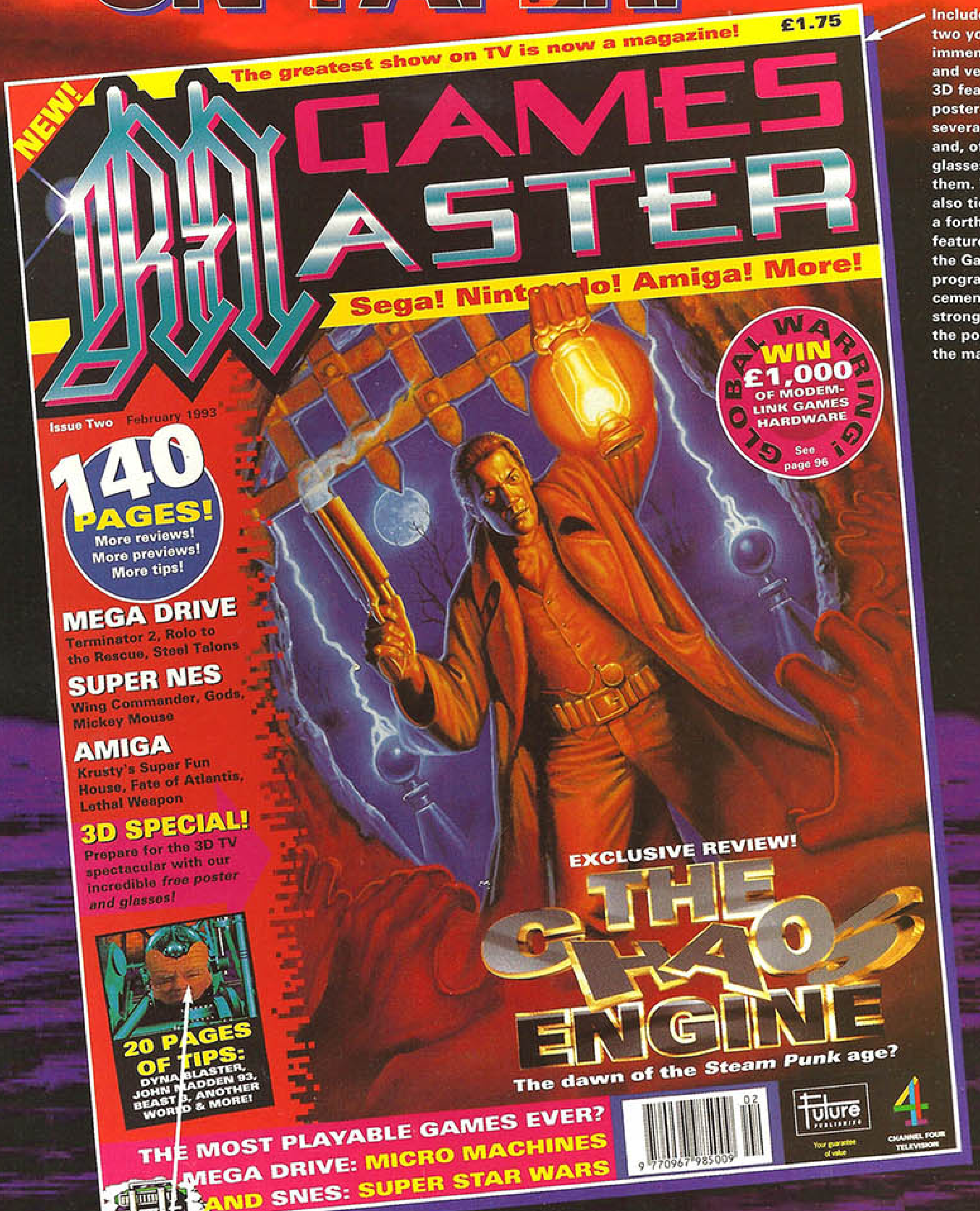

£1.75

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Issue Two February 1993

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More previews!
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Wing Commander, Gods, Mickey Mouse

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THE MOST PLAYABLE GAMES EVER?
MEGA DRIVE: MICRO MACHINES
AND SNES: SUPER STAR WARS

Included with issue two you'll find an immensely pleasant and very high quality 3D feature. There's a poster, complete with several 3D images, and, of course, the glasses to go with them. These glasses also tie in neatly with a forthcoming 3D feature to appear on the GamesMaster TV programme, thus cementing the already strong link between the popular show and the magazine.

It's crazy, it really is. Just look at how much has been crammed into this already over-large magazine. All the news from the entire industry, as well as the best in reviews, previews and of course numerous appearances by that self-styled wizard of the code, the GamesMaster. There's so much going on, it'll make your nose bleed.

NUMBER TWO - WHY ARE ELEPHANTS SO WRINKLY? WELL... ...HAVE YOU TRIED IRONING ONE?

ROLO TO THE RESCUE

FOR - MEGA DRIVE
FROM - ELECTRONIC ARTS
AVAILABLE - JANUARY
PRICE - £40
MEMORY - 8MBITS
STOP

OPTIONS - NONE
LEVELS - LOADS, LOTS
DIFFICULTY - OK/HARD
PLAYERS - ONE
SAVE GAME - NO
END

GAMES MASTER TIP

GREETINGS! This level is annoyingly simple, but you can waste hours discovering the solution. So try following this short guide.

1 Simply jump up to the first cage on the right and walk through the wall.

2 Collect the key from the ringmaster, head back left and free the squirrel from his cage. Ascend through the trees as far as Rolo can go.

3 Now you can use the squirrel to climb up the cliff, jump across on the elevator and bring it down for Rolo to ride on.

GRAPHICS

SOUNDS

PLAYABILITY

LASTABILITY

OVERALL

JUDGEMENT 84%

REVIEWS (MEGA DRIVE) 66

67

We won't just tell you what we think of the newest games, we'll take them apart for you. In GamesMaster you'll see the best bits, the worst bits and the bits no-one else can get to. Our team is the finest, and we also call on the top guest reviewers from other mags. You can't fail with us.

GamesMaster Magazine is an all-new games guide from Future Publishing. We've teamed up with the people behind the GamesMaster TV show to produce the smartest, liveliest and most informative reading experience ever! If you like the TV show, you'll love the mag, because each issue will give you a month's worth of concentrated GamesMaster excitement!
Every month we'll bring you exclusive info from Japan and America as well as the UK!
We'll be reporting on both official and grey import releases, and giving a full release schedule for the whole of 1993.
GamesMaster: now you're able to hold it in your hand...

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GAMESMASTER

MEGA PLAY

It's all change this month and it's time for the Mega Medic (alias Paul Mellerick) to join forces with Mega Play. We hope you like the new look. If so, read on...

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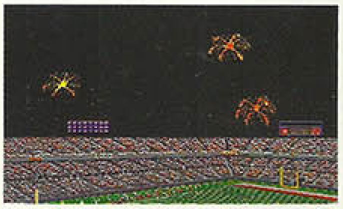
John Madden '92

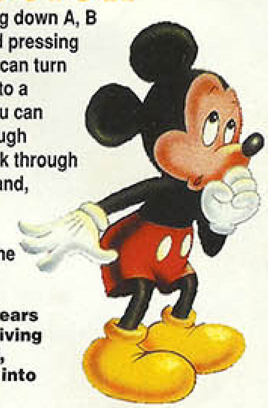


You never knew there was an end sequence on *Maddens*, did you?

At the end of the final, when the display of the pitch is shown and the score comes up, press Up, C, Down, C, Left, C, Right C, Up, B, Down, B, Left, B, Right, B, Up, C, Down, C, Left, C, Right, C. The screen should then move upwards to display the fireworks.
Thomas Horner, Letchworth, Hertfordshire

Castle of Illusion

By holding down A, B and C and pressing Start you can turn Mickey into a ghost. You can walk through walls, walk through enemies and, indeed, walk through the game.



If ol' big ears here is giving you grief, turn him into a ghost

SPEEDBALL 2

Always finish as runner-up in division two, because the play-off game will give you a few extra pennies in your purse. Convincingly beat Steel Fury twice and then let the Renegades beat Deluxe (you) twice by 200 points.

These sneaky tricks put you (Deluxe) and the Renegades up a league, and in the second season you should be able to put 350 points past the Renegades, while Hashwan and Co can only manage 200. This means a healthy 30-point boost to help you towards that title.

If you don't fancy doing all that for yourself, enter this code:
LAhM CJ78 2k7I Zy01
26Ss ti+L fvRS MBNx

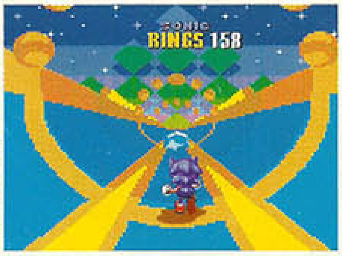
Use the latter code and you'll be in division one with loads of money. The rest is up to you.
Paul Randell, Denton Burn, Newcastle-Upon-Tyne

YOUR TIPS

Every day when we open the readers' letters, we wait with baited breath for some amazing tips so that we can tell the whole world about them. Most of the time we receive old Sonic tips (so stop sending in the level-select cheat for Sonic The Hedgehog!), but occasionally we get that amazing tip that just blows us away.

Take a look through the next four pages and if you've got an amazing tip you think we don't know, send it to us and you could win a prize. The sender of the best tip each month wins a cart. So, send your very best efforts to MEGA PLAY, MEGA, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon, BA1 2BW.

Sonic The Hedgehog 2



There it is – emerald number one. Only six more to go

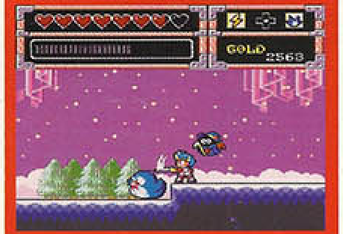
This is our first *Sonic 2* tip, which makes the game even easier than it already is. Play the game, and when you collect a Chaos Emerald, reset the game. Now enter the options menu and press Start. The game will start again, but you should still have the emerald you collected. You can now collect all the emeralds on the Emerald Hill Zone and burn through the rest of the game as Super Sonic. Also, by collecting every ring on a special stage you get a 50,000 points bonus at the end.
Ed Lomas, Rochester, Kent

MEGA MEDIC

WANDERING AROUND MONSTERWORLD

Q I have collected all the Legendary Weapons in *Wonderboy in Monsterworld*, except the Legendary Shield, because I can't find it. After collecting the Legend Armour I see a chain leading upwards, but I cannot reach this. Please can you tell me where the Legend Shield is? And where the chain leads are? And any cheats you may know? Please help, I'm desperate.
Mr J Madden, Wythenshawe, Manchester

A Right, I don't know this game very well, but I've managed to find out where you need to go. This explanation is very heavy and I'm assuming you know the game quite well – you've got this far after all.



This is one big game and it's very complex indeed

After you've collected the Legendary Armour, go to the left, find the Heart Container and go through the door. Come out, go through the door, and you'll be deminiaturised before appearing on top of an unreachable edge. Go up, then right, kill everything, and go up the first pulley to get the Legendary Shield. There you go. You're not far from finishing the game now, so go for it!

Team USA Basketball

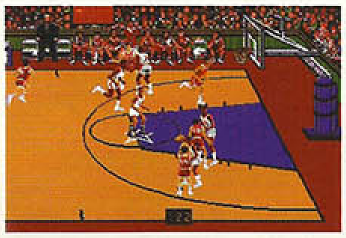
This is for the gold! We have the USA against China, the winner taking it all!

A continues, START skips

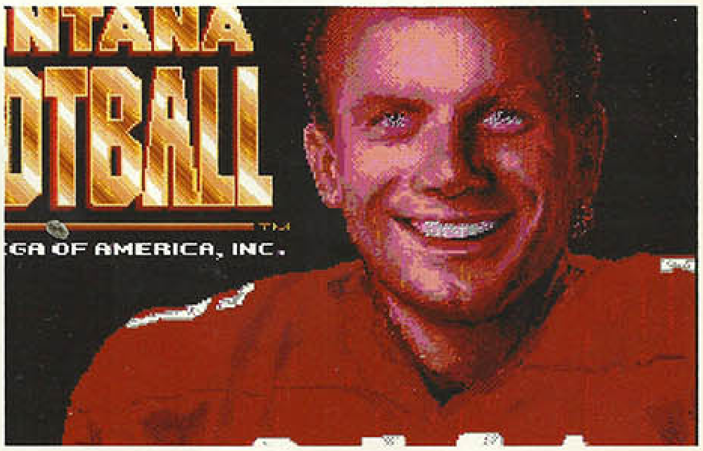
The nice calm, pastoral scene, before the sweaty, real action starts

There are 14 teams in this Olympic-related basketball game, and this month we've got the codes to get seven of the teams through to the final. Next month we'll have the other seven. Check these out, enter the codes and try to get on top of that rostrum:

CIS vs Yugoslavia – P4T3DB9
ANGOLA vs Yugoslavia – 0DR7BBQ
CANADA vs Yugoslavia – FDT32B£
AUSTRALIA vs Italy – R0T7LBY
CHINA vs Slovenia – YNT7GB9
CROATIA vs United States – 08TWNBN
USA vs China – SXT7RC0



China (in the red) are going for a long basket. Will it go in, or not?



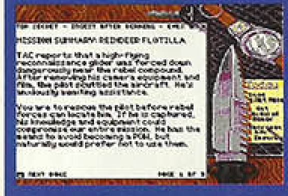
Joe Montana 3: **To get the San Francisco 49ers into the Sega Bowl enter 45TY??KBL.**
Jared Butler, Colchester

Trouble Shooter

If you're in need of a level select, press C, Right and Start together on controller two on the title screen and then press Right, C and Start to advance the stage number.
Ben Lloyd, Crowthorne, Berks

LHX Attack Chopper

Here are all the codes for the normal level of *LHX Attack Chopper:*



If you're having any trouble with a certain level, here are all the NORMAL passwords

Level 1: DAAAIHA
Level 2: DAAAQEA
Level 3: DAAAYFA
Level 4: DAAAAWC
Level 5: DACAIWC
Level 6: DACAQVC
Level 7: DACAYUC
Level 8: DACABHE
Level 9: DACAJGE
Level 10: DACARFE
Level 11: DACAZEE
Level 12: DACABXG
Level 13: DACAJWG
Level 14: DACARVG
Level 15: DACAZUG
Level 16: DACAAPA
Level 17: DCKAIKE
Level 18: DCKAQJE
Level 19: DCKAYIE
Level 20: DCKAA6G
Level 21: DCKAI4G
Level 22: DCKAQZG
Level 23: DCKAYYG
Level 24: DCKABLA
Level 25: DCKAJKA
Level 26: DCKARJA
Level 27: DCKAZIA
Level 28: DCKAB6C
Level 29: DCKAJ4C
Level 30: DCKARZC

Gregg Scott, Penicuik, Midlothian

Lemmings

In last month's issue of MEGA we listed all the codes for all the levels of *Lemmings*.

This month we bring you the news that Neil West, MEGA's resident *Lemmings* god, has finally (and much to the relief of the rest of the MEGA team) cracked the very last level of the game.

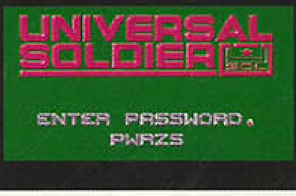
So, in the March issue of the mag Neil will be bringing you the complete solution to this joypad-busting level.

UNIVERSAL SOLDIER

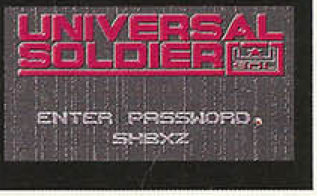
If some of the levels on this game are getting you down, then you might like to know the passwords for some other ones. If so, have a look at the codes on the right...

If, however, you fancy some other codes, these might be of some use. Enter the code RWRZS and the password screen will go green to let you know that the code has worked. This now makes you invincible, and you can walk through the game without dying. If you fancy revealing some hidden blocks though, enter SHBXZ instead and the screen will go grey. Now all the blocks holding power-ups will appear.
Wayne Burgess, Benfleet, Essex

Level 2: CHSGM
Level 3: MKSNS
Level 4: SGGBY
Level 5: JLGPH
Level 6: JDRSD
Level 7: PKSND
Level 8: CWBPN
Level 9: SFTNP
Level 10: CMVDG
Level 11: BYTCM



ENTER PASSWORD.
PWRZS



ENTER PASSWORD.
SHBXZ

Earnest Evans

This tip works on both the Mega CD and Mega Drive versions of the game (the cart version is the same as the CD game, but without the sound or the demo). If you're having trouble with a particular level, then pause the game and press Up, A, Down, Left, A, Right, B and then unpause the game. There, that makes the game a lot easier to get through.

ThunderForce II

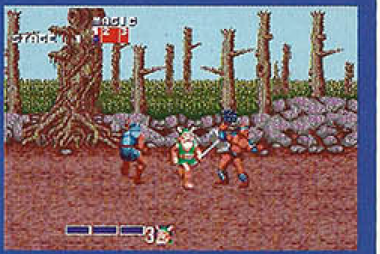
New (or crap) gamesplayers might be finding this shoot-'em-up a bit on the tough side. Perhaps it would help if you knew how to access a hidden options screen. Press buttons A, B, C and then Start on the title screen to change the parameters.

Ben Smith, Naphill, High Wycombe

IT'S CLASSIC TIP TIME

Come with MEGA as we open the big book of tips, dust off the pages and reveal yet another tip that, if it wasn't for us, would be lost forever in the mists of time. This month... *Golden Axe.*

For a handy level select, hold down the Right and Down diagonal on the player-select screen and then press B and Start simultaneously. And then quicker than you can slash your sword and say, "oh, what a classic tip," a level number will appear in the bottom left-hand corner.



Your handy, dandy level select

Steel Empire

99 is a big number, isn't it? (Not as big as 100, but yeah it's pretty big – Neil.) Well, if you fancy 99 bombs on this shoot-'em-up, press C, A, C, A, Start and B on the ship-selection screen. If, however, you fancy 99 lives, go to the options screen, set the difficulty to hard, set the stock to two and set the credits to one, and then play tune 65 on the soundtest option.

MEGA MEDIC

THIS GUY'S HAVING A PHANTASY ABOUT HIS MOTHER

Q Please help me, as I am near the end of my tether and running out under a bus or jumping in front of a train is beginning to look like the only answer.

You see, I've got a problem with *Phantasy Star 2.* I've defeated the Dark Force, but I can't get anywhere against Mother Brain. What should I be using in terms of techniques, weapons, and the like? My character is at level 40 and so is the rest of my team. I've spent the last few weeks just mooching around building up levels, but all to no avail. What can I do?

David Wilkinson, Essex

A Your character levels are high enough, but it's all a question of the right set-up and just letting fly with your attacks. Set up your players as shown below and just keep trying. Oh, and buy plenty of Trimate as well, and I mean plenty.

You: Nathu, then Neisword, and heal with Trimate

Hunter: Neishot

Guardian: Neislasher, AC Slasher

Doctor: Nasar

That's the best I can do, so good luck.

Curse

The level-select cheat has to be the most useful in any game. If you fancy one on this game, then reset the game and press A and Start together. There you go.

FASTEST ONE

If you're having a bit of trouble staying on the track in *Fastest One,* then enter your name as HAPPY NEW YEAR in the world championship mode and you'll receive tyres most people would die for.

Where In Time Is Carmen San Diego?

If you fancy some codes to get you that bit further through *Where In Time Is Carmen San Diego?,* then these should do the trick.

Ace Time Detective – LHMNFGF
Capture Carmen – MJDFPDG
Super Time Sleuth – MJDFSGG
Super Ending – JHBHHXS

Spain
1828 AD
TIME REMAINING 23 HRS
TRAVEL
SEARCH
DATA
ABORT
325I Chronoskimmer

Spain's riches declined in the 19th century when its American colonies were lost. Gold and silver from Mexico and Peru no longer supported Spain's economy.

RBI 4 Baseball

It's weird tip time and believe me, games don't come much stranger than this one. Go to the password screen and enter RBI BASEBALL4 as the code. You'll now see a message appear at the bottom of the screen and you'll be given a special passcode. Spooky!

Strange and spooky cheats from the world of MEGA PLAY...

OUT
87 MPH
Ball 0
Strike 2
Out 2
R Milligan
Avg 263
Hr 16
Bats 7th
Top 2
Balt 0
Calif 0
Jim Abbott
Era 2.89

MEGA MEDIC

THE CASE OF THE MISSING BODY

Q Could you please help me? I am playing *Alien 3* and I can get to level nine quite easily, but I am having problems finding the final prisoner. He's right underneath the exit, but I can't get to him. If you could help, I would be forever grateful.

K Simmons, St Mary's, Isles of Scilly

A Yes I do know how to get to the final prisoner. This guy is in a little hidden room all by himself. You need to know where to enter the room in order to rescue the hostage. Follow these instructions to get to him.

From the exit go back up the two ladders and you'll come out on top by the lift. Take the lift down and get off at the bottom. Fall down to the bottom of the room and take another lift downwards. Get off and walk right, into the wall. Now jump and move right and you'll disappear through the wall to where the hostage is waiting for you. In last month's issue of MEGA, we showed you how to get through levels 11 to 15, so you now should be able to finish the game.

F1 CIRCUS

Not a very well known game this, but you might like to try this tip to make things just that little bit easier. To skip training mode, select step one of training (either a straight or corner course, it doesn't matter). As the starter counts down to 0, move into reverse and drive backwards around the course for a good lap time. If you continue to clear all the round like this, six teams will try to sign you up.

Lee Chisten, Earlston, Berwickshire

F-22 Interceptor

Mission Successful
Flying to next waypoint

Oi, come back here matey!

If you fancy trying your hand at some different bits of this game, then try the following codes.

8GG209,	B4ZHIP,	AG8F6S,
AGEGAL,	AOGAM6,	DOG3UZ
AO0H2Z,	DKG3AA,	
9GI9E7,	ACGC64,	

Christopher didn't exactly say what these codes do – you'll just have to try them and see.

Christopher Jones, Birmingham

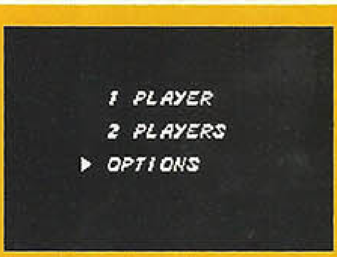
STREETS OF RAGE

Cheats for this classic beat-'em-up have always been a bit on the dodgy side. You know the sort of thing: extra points, continues, or the use of the lives of the two-player mode. Well, after all this time we've come across a level-select cheat and a lives-select code too. All you need are two joypads, a copy of *Streets of Rage* and the following description courtesy of MEGA.

Press Start on the title screen and move the cursor down to OPTIONS. On the controller, press and hold down Right. Press and hold down button A, press and hold down button B and then press and hold down button C (make sure you do these individually and not all at the same time). Now, while you're still holding down all these buttons, press Start on controller one. You'll enter the options menu and at the bottom you'll be able to change the level and your number of lives. If you really want to use this facility, this means that you can start the game with seven lives on level eight or you can start on level one with one life, making it easy or hard – it's up to you. Oh, and this works for both players as well, so get a mate to join in and you double your fun.

STREETS OF RAGE TM
PRESS START BUTTON
© 1991 SEGA
MUSIC © 1991 YUZO KOSHIRO

Here's the title screen. Press Start on joypad one, then change over control to joypad two



Move down to OPTIONS and get ready to stretch those fingers and enter the code

MEGA MEDIC

GET GULPING

Q On act two of the Green Hill Zone in *Sonic the Hedgehog* just before the tunnel at the end when Sonic looks up, he can see a ledge. How does he get up there? Also, at the end of act two on the Scrap Brain Zone, Sonic can see a laser and Robotnik laughing behind it. How do you get past it, because on act three I always get killed?
MacDara Norris, Co Westheath, Ireland

A First things first. As far as I know, the platform you mention cannot be reached, because you're at the end of the level. The reason you can see Robotnik laughing behind the laser is that you're at the end of the game.

Scrap Brain Zone act three is the last real level of the game and you've got Robotnik on the run. The best thing to do to stay alive on this act is to remember to take gulps of air as often as possible. It's not that hard really.

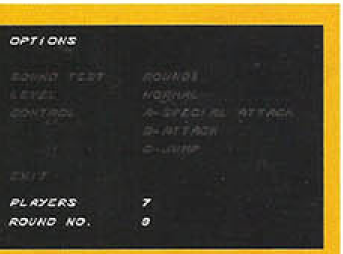
NHLPA Hockey

Tips for this game are hard to come by, but here's a real cracker. If you are having trouble finding some space from which to score, then a few extra players might help.

Get a couple of players in the Sin Bin and then pause the game and enter the Edit Lines mode. Now change all your players and go back to the game. When his sin bin time is over, the player(s) will come back onto the ice. It's possible to have up to seven players on the ice at one time.
Christian Ellis, Wesham, Lancashire

Well I don't know about you, but that looks like a goal to me

If you fancy playing *NHLPA Hockey* straight on, then try this team set-up. Choose the All Stars West as your team and again go to the Edit Lines menu. Now change your team to the following:
RD – Housley, RW – Yzerman,
C – Reonick, LW – Fedrov, LD – Chelios,
Now you should always come out on top.
Rowan Sorrell, Newport



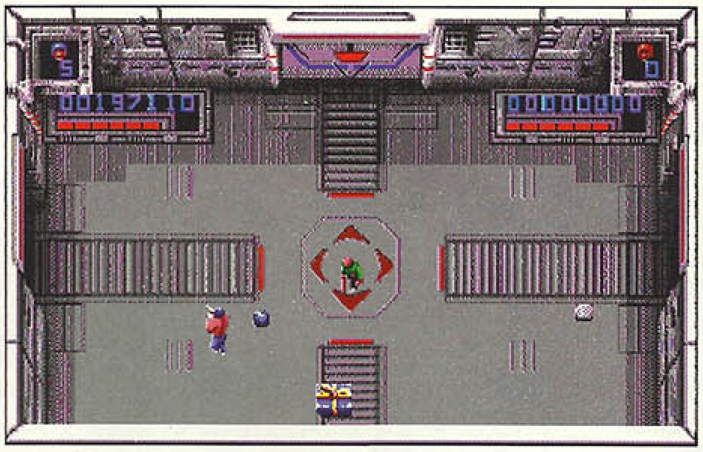
```
OPTIONS

SOUND TEST
LEVEL          NORMAL
CONTROL        A-SPECIAL ATTACK
               B-ATTACK
               C-JUMP

EXIT

PLAYERS        7
ROUND NO.      8
```

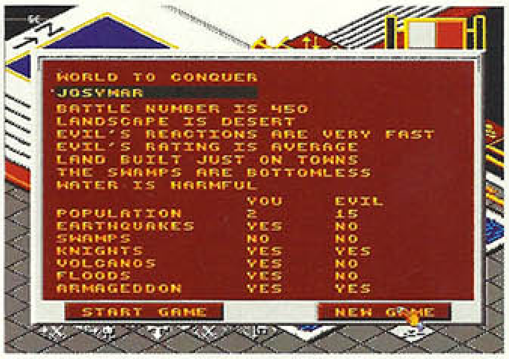
If you've done it all correctly, you'll see the round number and lives counter on screen



***Smash TV:* When you enter a room and you've wiped out almost everyone, leave one guy alone and avoid him. Now the room will start to fill up with goodies, like weapons, lives and keys. Make sure you don't kill him or pick up a smart bomb, 'cos you'll then have to exit the room.**

Populous

Printing all 500 codes for this game would take up a lot of space, but here are a few so you can pick and choose your difficulty level.



```
WORLD TO CONQUER
JOSYMAR
BATTLE NUMBER IS 450
LANDSCAPE IS DESERT
EVIL'S REACTIONS ARE VERY FAST
EVIL'S RATING IS AVERAGE
LAND BUILT JUST ON TOWNS
THE SWAMPS ARE BOTTOMLESS
WATER IS HARMFUL
                 YOU     EVIL
POPULATION       2       15
EARTHQUAKES      YES     NO
SWAMPS           NO      NO
KNIGHTS          YES     YES
VOLCANOS         YES     NO
FLOODS           YES     NO
ARMAGEDDON       YES     YES
  START GAME          NEW GAME
```

Select level number 450, and things are really stacked against you. You're going to have to be good to win

Level 50: HOBOZJOB
Level 100: CALEOLD
Level 150: BINQUEME
Level 200: EOAMPNET
Level 250: VERYOXT
Level 300: BILQAZOUT
Level 350: SUZDIEHOLE
Level 400: BADMEILL
Level 450: JOSYMAR
Ben Lloyd, Crowthorne, Berks

Ultimate Tiger

It's got a strange name and it's an even stranger game. Still, if you were invincible, then things would be a lot easier, wouldn't they? Well sorry, there's no chance of that, but there is a level-select cheat. Press Up, Down, Left and Right on the title screen and the cheat yours. Well, it's not exactly yours, it belongs to the game, but, um, you know what we mean...

Super Volleyball

Fancy a game of volleyball with you as the USA and your opponents as Russia? Yes? Then enter RP.VE as your code and away you go.

MEGA MEDIC

DIVE, DIVE AND DIVE AGAIN, IF YOU LIKE

Q I am impressed with the first three issues of MEGA, but I have a little problem which I hope you can solve. Can you please tell me any cheats for *688 Attack Sub?* Keep up the good work with the magazine and I hope you can solve my problem.
Lee Bunday, Beeston, Notts

A I did try to find some cheats for you, but unfortunately it was a fruitless task. The only cheats around are Game Genie codes, but seeing as I don't know if you've got one of these cheating devices, I can't help you. If any readers out there know of any cheats or tips for *688 Attack Sub*, please write in and tell me. Sorry.

ACTION REPLAY CODES

Bart Vs The Space Mutants:
FF01A 40001 or FF022 D0001 – Infinite spray cans
FF01B 50002 – Infinite energy
FF01B 40004 – Infinite lives
Cadash:
FF0E5 10099 – Unlimited energy
FF0E5 70099 – Unlimited magic
FF0A7 B0002 – Unlimited continues
FF0E9 30009 – Unlimited healing
Death Duel:
FFFF2 F0087 – Infinite time
FFFF0 30002 or FFFF2 90002 – Infinite tries
Lemmings:
FFF48 E0013 – Infinite builders
FFF48 B0013 – Infinite floaters
FFF48 A0013 – Infinite climbers
FFF48 C0013 – Infinite bombers
FFF48 D0013 – Infinite blockers
FFF48 F0013 – Infinite miners
FFF48 00013 – Infinite diggers

GAME GENIE CODES

Afterburner II:
AKYT AAHT –Start on stage 23 (the last one)
NTNA AABW or NTNA AAB4 – Start with 100 missiles
AT2A AA6C – Infinite continues
Desert Strike:
RH9T 860E – Master code
D3ZA AA7E – Infinite lives
WBST WCGL – Hellfire inflicts 400 damage
Mercs:
CTBT AA4N – Master code
BAMT AAAA – Eight mega crash bombs
RG3A A61C or 983A BJ9A – Awesome firepower
PGA Tour Golf:
RH9A R6ZA – Master code
CGFT AABA – Golf bag holds 17 clubs
EAKA BJ26 – Top 32 make cut
Kings Bounty:
R17A R6V0 – Master Code
AMBA AA84 – Recruiting doesn't reduce population
RGNAA6YY – Armies work for free
CBCT AA6T – Never run out of days

This month's winner

Thankfully, that's another tips section over with for another month. And now it's time to announce the name of the sender of the best tip in this section. It's been a tough decision, but I think the prize should go to *Gregg Scott* from Penicuik in Midlothian.

Well done Gregg, and thanks to your hard work and great gameplaying skills on *LHX Attack Chopper* you've won yourself a cart of your choice – so write back to us and let us know what you'd like.

Don't forget, next month there will be another winner, so send those tips in without delay. Send them to: MEGA PLAY, Future Publishing, Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon, BA1 2BW.

"What have we here?" we hear you cry. Well actually, we have tips for over 140 Mega Drive games. Impressive huh? And as if that weren't enough, every month we will be adding new tips to this list until... well, until we have to get rid of some because there isn't enough room in the magazine for much else. It's incredibly informative *and* it means that if you send in a tip which doesn't already appear on one of the next four pages, not only will it be printed in MEGA PLAY, but it will then sit majestically in this listing until we decide it's old cack

AFTER BURNER 2

- On the intro screen hold down A, B, C and Start. When the carrier appears, select your start level with Left and Right.
- When pressing the speed-up button, wait until you reach maximum speed then double tap the speed-up button quickly for an extra burst.
- For 100 missiles press Left and B on stage 3, Right and B on stage 5, B on stage 9 and Right and B on stage 11.
- For 100 missiles press Left and B on stage 13, Right and B on stage 16, B on stage 19 and Right and B on stage 21.

AIR DIVER

- Move the mission-select cursor to an un-named area. Hold Start and press A, B, C, B, A, A, B, C, B, A, B. Select your target and press Start for invincibility.
- Move the mission-select cursor to an un-named area. Hold Start and press A, B, C, B, A, A, B, C, B, A, B. Select your target and press A to meet the fighter aco.
- Move the mission-select cursor to an un-named area. Hold Start and press A, B, C, B, A, A, B, C, B, A, B. Select your target and press B to go to the super carrier.
- Move the mission-select cursor to an un-named area. Hold Start and press A, B, C, B, A, A, B, C, B, A, B. Select your target and press C to face the last alien ship.

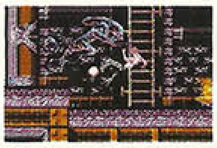
ALESTE

- Press Reset on the title screen and then hold Left until the title screen comes back up for a level select.
- Pause the game and press Up, Up, Up, Down, Down, Left, Left, Left, Right, Right, C, C, B, A and then Start for 20 extra continues.

ALEX KIDD IN THE ENCHANTED CASTLE

- Paperockians' solution: 1) Rock, rock; 2) Scissors, scissors; 3) Rock, scissors; 4) Paper, paper; 5) Rock, rock; 6) Rock, scissors.
- On the final screen, Lake Deep, walk in the following order: Sun, wiggly lines, moon, star, sun, moon, wriggly lines, fish, star, fish, crown.

ALIEN 3

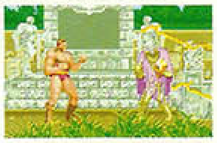


- From the start of level two fire at the oncoming alien then jump up-left through a gap in the wall for a secret room.

ALISIA DRAGOON

- Strategically use your smart bomb weapon to discover bonuses hidden off screen.

ALTERED BEAST

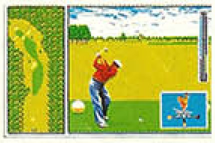


- Press Start and B on the intro screen to access an extra options menu, including power, lives etc.
- Press A, B, C, Start, Down and Left simultaneously. You can now change into any animal on any level.
- Hold down A and Start for infinite continues when you've finished a game.

ARCUS ODYSSEY

- The code to enter the final level is KYMEMUU05F.

ARNOLD PALMER TOURNAMENT GOLF



- Take over 100 shots on a hole. Now press A, B, C and Up to enter a version of Fantasy Zone!
- This is the code to enter the last round with loads of money: 0MHE2VfC4gVUra0Ujd qKUD6vygcUAAur-bgv
- Enter a secret tournament by using the following code: ffffffffffffffff 9999999999999999

ARROW FLASH

- Set the arrow flash to charge and then watch the demo. Start the game, and if the arrow flash which should have been charged is stocked, you're sorted.

ASSAULT SUIT LEYNOS

- Get all the weapons by shooting just the end-of-level guardian on level one to give you 2,800 points and massive destructive power.
- For invincibility press Start on controller number two at the intro.
- Nine extra continues can be yours when you die. Go to the options screen when you have only two continues left and press Start.

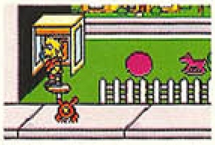
AXIS FZ

- On the control configurations allocate A for option, B for select and C for hand. Exit and hit Reset. Demo to level five and join in!

BACK TO THE FUTURE 3

- Pause game then press Up and A, Down and A, Left and A, then Right and A to warp to the next level.

BART VS THE SPACE MUTANTS



- Wait outside the cinema on level one. When your timer counts down to 400 a boy dressed in purple will walk out. How about that?
- At the end of the level, stand under the last window of the retirement home and use the whistle to get more money.

BATMAN

- On level three, get the extra life from the first chimney. Continue upwards then return. Repeat nine times for nine lives.

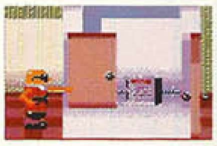
BATTLE GOLFER

- Press B and Start on the title screen for a secret music test.

BATTLE SQUADRON

- Stick to the red weapon, seriously.

BONANZA BROS



- Step on a rake at the same time you're hit by a bullet to become temporarily invincible.

BUCK ROGERS

- Steal the Plasma Cannon from the pirates.

BUDOKAN

- The jumping strike is the most powerful move in Kendo.
- Kicks are the most crippling blows in Karate.
- The triple strike is the way to go in Nunchaku.
- Use the overhead and spinning jump strikes in the art of Bo.

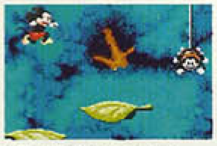
BURNING FORCE

- On the options screen press B, A, B, A, A, C, A, A then start the game. You'll have ten lives.

CALIFORNIA GAMES

- Half-Pipe Skateboarding – go for the straight up and down movement of the aerial turns. Press Down on the way down and Up on the way up to get more speed and theefore a higher jump.
- Foot Bag – perform two jesters and the bag will flash red. Now all stunts are worth double.
- Surfing – turn to ride up a wave then turn in mid air to come back down at the same angle.
- Roller Skating – spinning while jumping will increase your points many times over, but it also means that you stay in the air longer.
- BMXing – the move that gives you the most points is the backward flip. Get to the end of the level with more than 40,000 points and you'll receive a new bike.

CASTLE OF ILLUSION



- When you've finished a level, press Start while your score's being added for extra lives.
- Kill the tree-trunk boss by waiting to the left of the screen and by firing apples at him when he turns into a tree trunk.

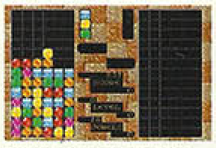
CENTURION

- Use the code: BN4Q AUIIV W6IQ ZCA5 555S 73U to get well ahead.

CHUCK ROCK

- While the band plays, press ABRACADABRA and the guitarist will smile. Press A, B and C together, start the game and press Up while holding A to advance a level.

COLUMNS



- Build a column of blocks on one side of the screen. Position a magic block so that only two of the tree blocks fit on the screen.The third block will fall separately.

CORPORATION

- At the start, buy one gun(2), two grenades, one bomb, one power pack, four refills, three electronics, one armour(3).
- The most important weapon is the bomb, but don't use it until you get put into prison as it is your only means of escape.
- If thrown in prison, simply check your pockets...
- Don't buy a lock-pick, find one.
- The crab monster is only a hologram, but sometimes it's hiding something infinitely more dangerous.

CURSE

- Press Reset, hold down A and press Start to choose the level on which you wish to start.

CYBERBALL

- Enter P5BB B5PS IHEX to play in the finals as the Minnesota Maulers.
- Use the code L5BB LDCI BFAV to play the LA Assassins in the final with $6,948,000 in the bank.
- Use the code: CGBB B8FB BB2V to see the end.

DANGEROUS SEED

- Press Up, Down, Left, Left, Right,

Right, Up, Down to enter "expert mode". A chime will tell you when you've got it.

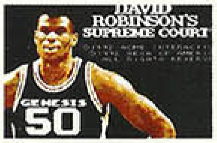
DARIUS 2

- On the intro screen press A, B, A, C, B, C, C, B, C, A, B, A. A "No Hit" message should appear and then you're invincible.
- On the intro screen press C, A, C, B, C, A, B, A, B, C, A, C for a level select.

DARWIN 4081

- Play track 32 on the sound test. Hit A for each level you want to skip.

DAVID ROBINSON'S BASKETBALL



- Some passwords:

CABCDEA1F – Los Angeles vs Detroit
Password: ASTURBQIE – Chicago vs New York
Password: FMJCLJY1B – New York vs Detroit
Password: WYBCDEAYU – Detroit vs Los Angeles

DECAP ATTACK

- Land vertically on top of a bouncy pole. If the red segments turn white, your life is replenished.
- Level 1-3: when you start, fall down from the platform on which you are standing and walk right. Smash the statue for your prize.
- Level 2-3: Fall down, jump up, fall down again, walk as far left as you can go, jump up to the platform above you and smash the statue.
- Level 3-3: Jump on the clouds and head right towards the two columns with arrows pointing inwards. Jump between them and walk right on the water to the statue
- Level 4-3: Travel through the first puddle of water to the next one. Go left and fall down the hole. Keep heading left over the lava pit and bash that statue.
- Level 5-3: Hop over the first two lava pits and when you reach the third one, stop in and grab your prize.
- Level 6-3: The statue is hidden under the ice but above the molten lava in the middle of the stage.
- Level 7-3: The statue is in the water surrounded by those horrible little fish-like creatures.

DESERT STRIKE

- To rescue your co-pilot from the bomber, blow a hole in the middle of the bomber then wait until he walks along the wing. Move close to pick him up.
- Here are some codes:

Level 2: BQJRAEF
Level 3: TLJKOAP
Level 4: WTEOVJP

- Jake is hidden in the top right-hand corner on the second campaign, you're told you've rescued him in campaign three.
- For five lives instead of three enter code: TQQQLOM
- For ten lives instead of three enter code: BQQQAEZ
- When the Apache AH-64 attack helicopter and the words "DESERT STRIKE" appear on screen, fire Hellfires by pressing button A.

DEVIL CRASH

- Here's a code for all you pinball wizards: ALCLAE8ECK.
- To get to the last level, enter code: 5VENAXUEMN

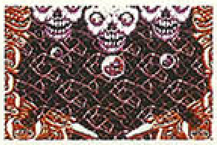
DEVILISH

- Hold down A, B, C and Left on the title screen and press Start for 99 balls.

DJ BOY

- Hit the third falling barrel on level three to reveal loads of secret goodies.

DRAGON'S FURY



- Enter UUBV99BQRE for 73 balls and 505,705,300 points.
- Enter ALCLAE8ECK for 21 balls and the end-of-game sequence.

DYNAMITE DUKE

- Press Start for the normal options screen to appear, but press C ten times and Start for a totally different options screen.

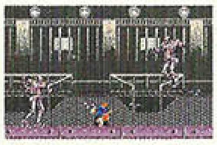
EA HOCKEY

- For a 4-2 lead in the finals as the USSR against the USA, enter the following code: HKT82Y93JDB7G435
- Don't forget that you can substitute goal keepers if one isn't behaving properly.

ELEMENTAL MASTER

- Press A and Start simultaneously to enter the hidden options screen.

ESWAT



- Finish the game, press Right and Down and A, B and C while simultaneously pressing Start on the title screen for a level select.

EURO CLUB SOCCER

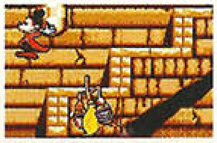
- Choose who you play as in the finals as by using the following codes:

Norwich City – 373UAA4IGC (vs Rangers)
Liverpool – SAHEAA6ICA (vs Celtic)
Aston Villa – BEDUAA7ICA (vs Real Sociedad)
Tottenham Hotspur – J6CUAA8IHA (vs Celtic)
Arsenal – ZWNEAA9IAE (vs Bordeaux
Nottingham Forest – KQAEABAIAE (vs PSV Eindhoven)
Leeds United – J9NUABBIAE (vs Gothenburg)
Everton – 7BKEABCIAE (vs Seville)
Manchester United – 3YREABDIAE (vs Hearts)
Chelsea – D7FUABEIAE (vs Hearts)
West Ham United – GE8UABFIARE (vs AC Milan)
Rotherham United – PVUUABGIAE (vs Hamburg)

FAERY TALE ADVENTURE

- To see the end of the game enter this code: 7R2KUL6RSZXSK6NHGSDCB7206 63RI2HO785P.

FANTASIA



- On level 1-2, grab the extra life then continue right to a treasure chest. Get in and be warped back to the start of the level. Repeat.

FATMAN

- Start the game controlling Sheba by pressing B and C, then hit B twice on the title screen.

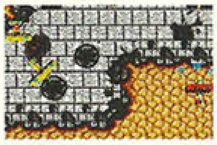
FINAL BLOW

- When you get knocked out, press Up and Start when "Game Over" appears. You'll continue with a free credit.

FIRE FIGHT

- To get to the hidden options screen, press the D-pad Left and press Start at the intro screen.

FIRE SHARK



- Finish the game and you'll restart with full power ups.
- Fully power-up your weapons, grab three power-ups, destroy either a General Porter or Yonemaru for two extra lives.

FORGOTTEN WORLDS

- For infinite continues play in two-player mode and press Start three times or so when a player dies.

F-1 GRAND PRIX

- Start the British Grand Prix in a McClaron's car by using the following code:

NABCTPHSNGKTIXBDDE
GMHUJOKLMTFJ HOILKL
LONVORQX LQMW

F-22 INTERCEPTOR

- Teleport to the final HQ message in the final two levels: Russian Challenge: KSQGIV
- Teleport to the final HQ message in the final two levels: Aces Challenge: MH01K1
- Teleport to the final HQ message in the final two levels: Korean challenge: BI0F8P
- Teleport to the final HQ message in the final two levels: Iraqui challenge: GTGE8V
- Teleport to the final HQ message in the final two levels: American challenge: 6PGE02

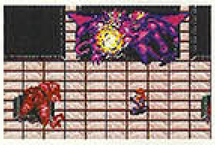
GALAHAD

- To get to level two enter ZXSP.

GAIRIES

- At the start of each level, pause the game and hold down buttons A and C then press Left. Unpause, and you'll be invincible.
- Go to the config screen by holding down A, B and C, then press Start. Set the sound test to 18, hold down A on the second controller and exit the config. Press Start on the first controller to go to the stage-select screen.

GAIN GROUND



- For a level-select option go to the option screen and press A, C, B, and then C. "Round select" will appear below "sound test".

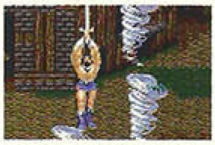
GHOULS 'N' GHOSTS

- On the title screen press button A four times, then Up, Down, Left then Right. Wait for the chime, then press B and Start for invincibility.
- On the title screen press A 16 times, then Up, Down, Left then Right. Wait for the chime, then press Up, A and Start to start halfway through level two.
- On the title screen press A 16 times, then Up, Down, Left then Right. Wait for the chime, then press Down, A, and Start to start on level three.
- On the title screen press A 16 times, then Up, Down, Left then Right. Wait for the chime, then press Down-Right, A, and Start to start on the final boss level.
- On the title screen press A 16 times, then Up, Down, Left then Right. Wait for the chime, then press Right, A, and Start to start on level five.
- On the title screen press A 16 times, then Up, Down, Left then Right. Wait for the chime, then press Left, A, and Start to start halfway through level four.
- Select number 26 on the music test, then number 56 on the sound test, hold Down/Left with A, B and C, then press Start to play in Japanese.

GOLDEN AXE

- Select a one-player arcade game and hold Down-Left with A and C. Let go for nine continues. Then hold B, Start and Left for a level select.

GOLDEN AXE 2



- Fight the first boss holding down A. Release A at the campfires, but don't attack anything. Continue with 200 magic units.
- Press A, B, C and Start on the titles, select options, keep holding A, hit B and C again, move to exit, keep holding A and hit B and C until you get to character select, hold A and Up and hit B and C one last time. Now pick your level.

GRANADA

- On the options screen, press C ten times on the rank section. You can now choose the easy rank.

GYNOUG

- Hold Left, A and C then press Start on the game-over screen for more continues.
- On the options screen, select the control icon and hold down A, B and C for ten seconds for a stage select.

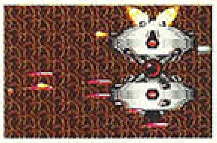
HARD DRIVIN'

- Hit the cow!

HEAVY UNIT

- Hit A, B, C and Start on the title screen for a new skill level.

HELLFIRE



- Choose a hard difficulty setting and listen to any track on the sound test for over a minute. The game will start itself with 99 continues.
- Play through level one to the columns with prizes in their tips. Blow up the last one and occasionally you'll see a robot woman dancing.

HERZOG ZWEI

- Here are some passwords:

GGGKHAGOKLO
BPHOHACAGML
NPLOFOCAGKP
IMLPFEGEMLC
LILOPBDPIKJ
JLJOMGJAOKL
JLJOIGJBOKO
LHJKINAFAMA

IMMORTAL (THE)

- Here are some passwords:

Level five: D4BFD41000EB
Level six: BCFEF51010A4
Level seven: 6B10F61010AC

- On level four, put a ring on each hole and then walk round in a clockwise direction until the exit appears.
- In the room with the three pentagrams, place one gem on the right hole of the first pentagram, one on the left hole of the next, and one in the centre of the last one.

INSECTOR X

- On the continue screen hold Up and Left and repeatedly press C very quickly for more credits.

JAMES "BUSTER" DOUGLAS BOXING

- Win four matches to win the heavyweight belt, then defend your title four times to meet a secret opponent called Iron Head.
- If you've run out of continues on James "Buster" Douglas Boxing, then press Up and Start on the game-over screen for one more try.

JAMES POND

- On mission one there are hidden entrances to level 11 (on the far left, out of the water) and on level 6 (on the far left of the sea bed, just before the cliff).
- Collect all the letters in the baddy rooms to spell James Pond and earn a massive 10,000,000 bonus.

JAMES POND 2 ROBOCOD

- Collect the objects on the roof at the start in this order: cake, hammer, earth, apple, tap for ten minutes of invincibility.
- On the sports level, collect the items on the tennis ball in this order: lips, ice-cream, violin, earth, snowman for infinite lives.
- On the title screen hold Down/Left and A and C and then press Start for a level select.

JOE MONTANA 2

- Choose the team you'd like to play as in the Sega Bowl final by using the following codes.

TIPS LIST

San Francisco – ZABT5EBPII (vs BUFF)
Los Angeles (A) – MABT54IHIA (vs NY)
Philadelphia – UX3T54IHIA (vs KC)
Los Angeles (N) – NAATAXXXKA (vs Miami)
Detroit – HPOTPVPGIE (vs S Diego)
San Francisco – ZABT5EBPII (vs Buffalo)
Los Angeles (A) – MABT54IHIA (vs New York)
Philadelphia – UX3T54IHIA (vs KC)
Los Angeles (N) – NAATAXXXKA (Miami)
Detroit – HPOTPVPGIE (vs S Diego)

JOHN MADDEN FOOTBALL

- Get to the quarter finals: 0465100
- Get to the semi-finals : 0075121, 0076310, 1111111 or 3333333
- Get to the Superbowl : 0475121, 0476314, 0633253, 0673125 or 0631573
- Fancy playing in the snow? Enter: 5504500

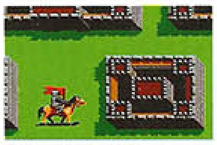
JOHN MADDEN FOOTBALL'92

Choose the team you'd like to play as in the finals by using the following codes:
Atlanta (vs San Diego) – CG1PYFTM
Buffalo (vs San Francisco) – BXMMC6M1
Chicago (vs Denver) – CG8JYLC1
Cincinnati (vs San Francisco) – BOXWLRM8
Cleveland (vs Philadelphia) – D5C5N11G
Dallas (vs Miami) – BDNT6NX7
Denver (vs Philadelphia) – C5ZWM8BZ
Detroit (vs Buffalo) – CZYZYZS8
Green Bay (vs Cincinnati) – DSBK3W5W
Houston (vs New York) – DSRTMLVY
Indianapolis (vs Phoenix) – BD1X612H
Kansas City (vs Atlanta) – CLG7Y8FF
Los Angeles (vs Miami) – CNYGOYHL
Miami (vs San Francisco) – B6KKGYOL
Minnesota (vs Buffalo) – BTDWO9BN
New England (vs Washington) – B9M3YDIP
New Jersey (vs New York) – C235TOZD
New Orleans (vs Kansas City) – B27O9V41
New York (vs Buffalo) – D42HGN2K
Oakland (vs Washington) – CDLLB7LM
Philadelphia (vs Houston) – CSWV7Z76
Phoenix (vs Buffalo) – CSSXHF4P
Pittsburgh (vs Chicago) – CZ97W14F
San Diego (vs San Francisco) – D8L3T4XY
San Francisco (vs Denver) – B3DFNO5K
Seattle (vs San Francisco) – BLTJXL6Z
Tampa Bay (vs Denver) – CK5HHPYP
Washington (vs Oakland) – CZSK2TMR

KID CHAMELEON

- At the end of Blue Lake Woods one don't touch the flag. Climb on the last block, and press Down-Right while holding jump and special to warp to the last boss.

KING'S BOUNTY



- When going into battle, always start with your long-range troops (archers, orks or elves).

KLAX

- Press Up and Left, buttons A, B, C and press Start on the title screen to increase the level ofdifficulty.
- On levels 6 or 11, try to make an X with the tiles to teleport you straight to level 49.

LAKERS VERSUS CELTICS

- Try this password: 3L2 GJS

LAST BATTLE

- Complete the game. Now press A, B, C and Start to choose your start level.

MARVEL LAND

- Enter the code TRIDENT for the last level.

MASTERS OF MONSTERS

- Press A, B and C then Start at the start to get to the end.
- Press A, B and C then Start at the start then hold Up-Left for English text.

MEGA PANEL

- Stop the girl talking by pressing button C anytime during play.

MERCS

- Get the gold first aid box when you've got maximum energy, pause the game, select another player, wait, select another player, and so on until all your team are at full strength.
- Enter the original mode and hold down A, B, and C. Now press Start to heat things up.
- On level eight (in original mode) annihilate all the guys exiting the door, then buy kit in the shop, with just one medal.

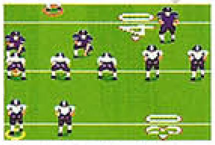
MIDNIGHT RESISTANCE

- On the title screen, hold C and press Start. Pause the action and hit A to skip to the next level.

MIGHT AND MAGIC

- To complete his Plus quest the knight must face and defeat (with only knights and robbers) the Dread Knight, who is in B3, location 5,14.
- The Sorcerer must travel to the Isle of Ancients in B3, 4,15. There is a dungeon at either end of the island and each holds a wizard, who must be freed from stasis.
- The Paladin must defeat the Frost Dragon, who is in C3 in the Forest Cavern.
- The Archer must pit his wits against Baron Wilfrey in B2, 11,2. This is one of the tougher quests.
- Cleric finds Corak's Soul in C1, location 10,15. The body is in C2 in Corak's Cave. The Cleric must have the Admit 8 Pass from the cavern beneath Sansobar to enter.
- After completing the Juror's Quests (winning a black triple crown) go to Queen Lamanda in the Luxus Palace Royale. She will make one of your party her Chosen One.

MIKE DITKA POWER FOOTBALL



- Go straight to the finals by using the following code: QzH5EG.

MOONWALKER

- Pick up a certain kiddie first and a star will flash across the screen. Catch the star and you become a robot for a short while.

NEW ZEALAND STORY

- During the demo, rotate either joypad for nine credits.

ONSLAUGHT

- Enter just zeros on the password screen to start well ahead.

OUTRUN

- Enter your name as ENDING to see the end sequence.
- Press Start to reach the option icon. Press the C button ten times, then press Start to access a Hyper difficulty level.

PGA TOUR GOLF

- Save your game after every decent shot, then simply restart your game if your next shot is crap.

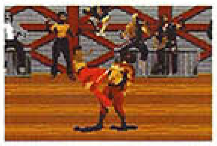
PHANTASY STAR 2

- Continually turn the status screen on and off during the action to avoid being attacked.
- To get the Maueragum, the third tree from the right is the real tree.
- To get to Piata, park your jet scooter in the indentation on the right-hand side of the map (next to the mountains) and then just walk.
- To get to Climatrol, go to Uzo Island, go under it, to the left. Go south from the island that looks like Uzo and you'll find a spider's web in the water.
- To get to the Visaphone, take Shir (the thief) to the baggage room in Paseo. Go in and out until she finds the Visaphone.
- To get the Moon Dew and Star Mist, take Shir (the thief) to the tool shop in Paseo. Go in and out of the tool shop until she steals it.
- Megoid is gained at level 35 by Rolf. Nasar is gained at level 30, by the Doctor.
- Once you have all the Nei items, go to Lutz and he will give you the Neisword.

PHELIOS

- When the Chapter One message appears with credit three, press C, A, B, A, C, A, B, A for nine credits.

PIT-FIGHTER



- On level nine in one-player mode, pause, plug in the second joypad, and press Start for three extra lives.

POPULOUS

- Here are some level-select codes:

025 – QAZITORY
050 – HOBOZJOB
075 – NIMLOPILL
100 – CALEOLD
125 – FUTDIMAR
150 – BINQUEME
175 – ALPAPAL
200 – EOAMPMET
225 – HURTOGODOR
250 – VERYOXT
275 – BUGINOND
300 – BILQAZOUT
325 – SCODEING
350 – SUZDIEHOLE
375 – SADOUTER
400 – BADMEILL
425 – BURIKEPIL
450 – JOSYMAR
475 – MINCEME
494 – WEAVUSPERT

POWERBALL

- Fancy a sound test? Then go to the league-continue mode and choose China. Enter KWGEN as your password and hit start.
- To find extra teams, pause a game, press B, B, C, B, B, C, now press Down for four extra teams.

PREDATOR 2

- Here are some passwords for *Predator 2.*

Level 2 – KILLERS
Level 3 – CAMOUFLAGE
Level 4 – LOS ANGELES (including the space)
Level 5 – SUBTERROR
Level 6 – TOTAL BODY (including the space)

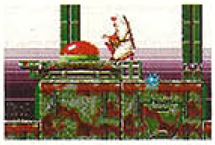
QUACKSHOT

- In Transylvania, collect the one-up, finish the level, call the plane, go back to the start of Transylvania and repeat to max out your lives.
- After the tiger when the roof falls down, jump on SUN, then MOON, then STAR.

RAINBOW ISLANDS

- Press Up, B, Down, Left, C, A, A, B and C on the title screen for full power-ups.
- On level one, collect all the diamonds in sequence from red to purple and kill the boss to access an entrance to a bonus screen.

THE REVENGE OF SHINOBI



- Select 00 shurikens at the start and wait for the two zeros to merge into an infinity symbol for infinite shurikens.

RINGSIDE ANGEL

- Choose Cuty Suzuki, hold A while pressing Start on the select screen to play against yourself.
- During a tournament, skip the computer bouts by holding Start and pressing any buttons.

RINGS OF POWER

- The ring of mutation can be found at 24, 1 longitude and 14,3 latitude.

ROLLING THUNDER 2

- The code for the final level is A PRIVATE THUNDER CREATED THE POWDER.

ROAD RASH

- Here are some level-select codes for this fab racing game.

Race to the final level – 21111 05VT0 102HF 47132
Level 2 – 10000 01CMO 01435 243DE
Level 3 – 00000 02TT1 10A2J 45TOT
Level 4 – 43143 067KO 01EVD 571RQ

SAINT SWORD

- Here are some level-select codes for *Saint Sword.*

IQW1EL – level 3-1
K2JOCK – level 4-1
KWWKQQ – level 4-2
QWQ10C2 – level 5-2
S2YY2Y – level 6-1
SOGZAL – level 6-2
XXKSIS – level 7-2

SHADOW DANCER

- Complete the whole of the first level using only magic to receive 100,000 bonus points.
- On the title screen, press A, B, C and Start at the same time to access a practice mode level select.
- On the first bonus level, don't shoot, simply dodge all the ninjas to earn an extra life.
- Enter your name as ZQX and press and hold A, B, C and Start until you get back into the game for infinite lives.
- Drop a coin down the well to receive an extra life

SHINING IN THE DARKNESS

- Take a magic item that loses power when used to be repaired. Have less money than it costs, go to sleep, pick up the items the following day and you'll get loads of money.
- The vial of tears: get all the Arms of Light and visit Jessa in the castle. Theos will gather her tears when she cries. Take the Vial of tears from Theos.
- Keep returning to the tavern in the village to get up-to-date information like the whereabouts of important characters.
- Here are some passwords:

Level one: stairs from level one to level two – 10S, 12E
Cave Of Courage: stairs down to get to the Boss – 10S, 9E
Cave Of Truth, use the Fake Idol – 7S, 23E
Cave Of Wisdom: hole to fall down (which gets you to the end) – 10S, 18E
Level 3: Light Helm – 8S, 29E; Light Shield – 9S, 1E; Rope – 27S, 1E

Level 4: Light Blade – 5S, 11E; Cell Key – 13S, 9E
Level 5: Light Armour – 5S, 9E
Bosses: Kaiser Crab – 18S, 12E; Gila (cave of strength) – 21S, 7E; Tortolyde (cave of courage) – 17S, 4E; Doppler (cave of truth) – 7S, 21E
Bosses: Grim Wall (level one) – 20S, 16E; Black Bone (level three) – 27S, 19E; Dark Knight (level four) – 13S, 7E; Dark Sol (level five) – 11S, 15E

SHOVE IT

- Enter !AYASAM! on the password screen to get to the last level.

SLAUGHTER SPORT

- Choose the character you want to play as by doing the following key combinations.

Bonapart – press A then Up then C then Start on the title screen
Buff – press Left then C then B then Start on the title screen
El Toro –press B and C together, A then Up then Start on the title screen
Guano – press Up then Right and A and B together then Start on the title screen
MC Fire – press Down then C then Right then Start on the title screen
Mondu – press A and B together then Down the Left then Start on the title screen
Ramses – press Right then Left then A then Start on the title screen
Robo Chic – press Right then Up then Down then Start on the title screen
Sheba – press B and C together then B then B again then Start on the title screen
Skinny – press Right then Down then Right then Start on the title screen
Webra – press A and C together then Up then Right then Start on the title screen
Weezil – press Down then Right then Up then Start on the title screen

SOL DEACE

- On the title screen press A, B, C, A, B, C, B, C, B, A and Start. Enter the Config mode, select Start, choose your level, select Mode, press Right until the symbol MY99 appears for 99 ships.
- Skip levels by pressing buttons A, B and C together.
- To play in slow motion, pause the game and tap the fire button.

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG

- On the intro screen press Up, Down, Left, Right and then hit A and Start to access a level select.
- Press Up, C, Down, C, Left, C, Right, C, hold down A and press Start. Play Green Hill Zone, Act 1 and get at least 50 rings. Enter the chaos maze and press B to turn Sonic into a ring. Now find the hidden zone.
- Finish any act in under 30 seconds for a 50,000 points bonus.

SPACE HARRIER 2

- For a level select, press buttons A, B, C and the joypad Left or Right during the start sequence.

SPACE INVADERS '90

- On the intro screen, press and hold buttons A and C. Now press Start, then B, A and C for the level-select screen.

SPEEDBALL 2

- Enter LCLI CWAF O6XE ya3q 2bst -is1 gGVC to enter division one.
- Save your cash for the first few games. Better players will soon be available on the transfer market.

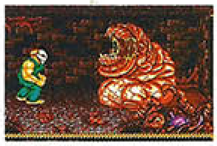
SPIDERMAN

- Before you meet the kingpin, investigate the maze and find the full web power-up. You'll need this to stop Mary Jane from falling into the fiery pit.

SPIDERMAN VERSUS THE KING-PIN

- On Nightmare mode at the warehouse, climb onto the first pile of crates, swing onto the next pile, beat up the bad guy, swing over the guard dog and land on the next pile then start crawling.
- When you first get to the Sandman, carry on right to the edge of the screen to collect a full life power-up.

SPLATTERHOUSE 2



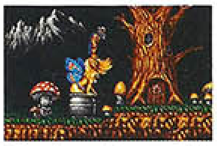
- Press A, B, C and Start together in game to reset – so be careful.
- Here are some level-select codes:

Level 2 – EDK NAI ZOL LDL
Level 3 – IDO GEM IAL LDL
Level 4 – ADE XOE ZOL OME
Level 5 – EFH VEI RAG ORD
Level 6 – ADE NAI WRA LKA
Level 7 – EFH XOE IAL LDL
Level 8 – EDK VEI IAL LDL

STEEL EMPIRE

- On the title screen, hold button B and press Start to start on level two.

STORMLORD



- Pause the game, then press A, A, A, A, C, C, B, B, B, C, A. Now unpause and you'll have five extra lives.
- At any point in the action, pause your game and press C, B, B, B, A, A, A, A, C, C, A, A, A, A to skip to the end of the level.

STREETS OF RAGE

- For more continues press Left, Left, B, B, B, C, C, C and then Start when Game Over appears.
- Play to the end with a mate, both say yes to the question, go back to level six, continue to the end, fight it out between yourselves for the "bad ending".

STRIDER

- On the airship, fall to the bottom, walk left, destroy all the bombs, climb to the top left and kill the panda!

SUPER HANG ON

- During the title sequence press A, B, C and Start together for a new difficulty option.
- Try these passwords:

5FF3F540F33504
FFHWKJOMBJOFDU

SUPER LEAGUE BASEBALL

- Look at the carpark before the start. In the right-hand corner is Virgil Tracy's Thunderbird 2.
- Use this code to start with a four game lead:

JORQWVVRROOQSHPQGUDEAM

SUPER MONACO GP

- Here are some level-select passwords for *Super Monaco GP*.

Race 2 – Brazil:
0961 4003 0000 0200
000N R123 4567 O9AB
0CDE F000 0000 0000
0000 0000 1200 F9DE
Race 3 – France:
0F8A 8033 0000 0300
000N R123 4567 O9AB
0CDE F000 0000 0080
0000 0000 2100 5F8D
Race 4 – Hungary:
0J8D 9233 6000 C000
0000 7123 4567 09AB
C8DE F000 0000 0000
0000 0000 3200 759D
Race 5 – West Germany:
0P9H B533 6000 L000
000O 7123 4567 0PAB
C8DE F000 0000 0001
0000 0000 4200 ACF9
Race 6 – USA:
0VCH D633 F000 P000
000K N123 4L67 0PAB
C8DE F000 0000 0000
0000 0000 5200 E09D
Race 7 – Canada:
05GH F733 O000 S000
000K N123 4L67 0PAB
C8DE F800 0000 0080
0000 0000 6100 F7BA
Race 8 – Great Britain:
0BHL HR33 7005 0000
000R K123 4067 59AC
R8DE F800 0080 0000
0000 0000 7200 41D1
Race 9 – Italy:
0HLM K433 9005 0000
000G KH23 4067 59AC
R8DE F808 0080 0000
0000 0000 8200 5D53
Race 10 – Portugal:
0NLQ MD43 9008 0000
000G KH23 4067 59AC
R8DE F808 0080 0080
0000 0000 9100 BE4D
Race 11 – Spain:
0MRR QP73 9080 0000
000K 0023 4H67 59CA
B8DE F808 0010 0001
0000 0000 A200 9352
Race 12 – Mexico:
1MV4 RRA3 90E0 0000
0004 0023 4167 59CA
B8DE F888 0010 00G1
0G00 0000 B200 054A
Race 13 – Japan:
1V55 UTA3 90I0 0000
000K 0023 4H67 59CA
B8DE F898 0010 0001
0000 0000 C200 DC75
Race 14 – Belgium:
189B VVA3 90L0 0000
000K 0023 4H67 59CA
B8DE FG98 0010 0001
0000 0000 D200 3241
Race 15 – Australia:
1HFC 21A3 90P0 0000
000K 0023 4H67 59CA
B8DE FG9H 0010 0001
0000 0000 E200 6AB4
Race 16 – Monaco:
1QJI 42A3 90S0 0000
000K 0023 4H67 59CA
B8DE FG9H 0010 0001
0000 0000 F200 65DA

Start in the madonna team with a World Championship title to your name:

4000 0000 0000 0000
0000 GGD5 3627 B14C
FA89 E000 0000 000I
0000 0000 G300 FA0F

- Finish in the top three on the Monaco circuit. Hold down buttons A, B and C as you finish in the top three on the wet circuit and you'll hold up your head instead of the trophy.
- Smash into the guy holding the chequered flag at the end of the Monaco race and he'll fly away into the background, loosing all your points.

SWORD OF SODAN

- Collect four Etherium potions and drink them all at once to warp to the next level.

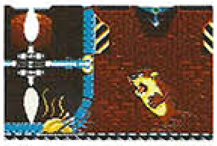
SWORD OF VERMILLION

- Cleanse a cursed sword at a church.

TASK FORCE HARRIER EX

- Place the cursor over the Config option and press Up, Down, Left, Right, A and C together, then B and Start simultaneously for more options.

TAZ-MANIA



- Plug in two joypads, press A, B, C and Start on both of them simultaneously on the title screen, pause the game, press B and then unpause the game to become invincible.
- Plug in two pads, press A, B, C and Start on both of them simultaneously on the title screen, pause the game, press C then unpause to select a level.
- On the arctic level near the end on a block of ice above some water, jump down to a hidden room full of bonus items.

TECHNOCOP

- In any building area, pause the game, press C ten times, A five times, B twice and A ten times. You'll hear "Techno Cop" and get all your lives back.

TERMINATOR

- Always wait for the extra time bombs at the start of each level.

TEST DRIVE 2: THE DUEL

- When driving, press and hold down A, B and C for a secret options menu.
- Pick the Ferrari for superior acceleration.

TETRIS

- For a really fast game, press Start and Down at the same time at the start.

THUNDERFORCE 2

- Hold down buttons A, B and C and switch on. Still holding the buttons, press Start on the title screen for a secret menu screen.

THUNDERFORCE 3

- Pause the game then simultaneously press Up and B ten times, then B and Down ten times. Repeat the process to get all the weapons.
- Finish the game and then press buttons A, B and C to get the pilot to wink at you.

TIGER HELI

- On the Game Over screen, keep pressing C, B, A in that sequence for loads of extra lives.

TOEJAM AND EARL

- Go to level three, grab some wings, fall to level one, fly to the bottom left-hand corner, and then fall through the island to enter a secret level.
- The ship pieces are found on levels 2, 6, 10, 12, 15, 17, 20, 21, 23 and 25.
- At the end of the game, when you're told to follow the Yellow Brick Road, explore the bottom-right corner and the very top of the level instead.

TRUXTON

- On a boss level drop a smart bomb, then hit pause. Wait ten seconds, then unpause to kill the boss.

TURRICAN

- Select options on the menu, skip to the exit icon. Hold Down, and then quickly press A, B, B, A, B, A, A, B, A, A, B, A, A for more options.

TWIN COBRA

- Hit start to get to the green title screen, then press Up, Down, Right, Left, A, B, C and Start to see the end credits.
- For maximum weaponry, pause the game and press Up, Down, Left, Right and hold A while pressing Start to resume the game.

TWO CRUDE DUDES

- Select a two-player game and use player two as a chuckable weapon!

VALIS 3

- Hold Up, A, B and C, press Start, and hold it until a blank screen appears. When you release the buttons, the words "Select Map 000" appear. Now you canselect your stage.

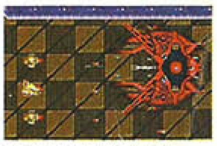
VERYTEX

- Pause the game, hold A, B and C, then press Down and Start for an extra life. Keep pressing Down and Start for more lives.

WANI WANI WORLD

- Press reset twice when the Sega word appears on the screen. Then you'll fine yourself with 200 lives.

ZERO WING



- Stick to the homing missiles.

ARENA

Let's get in the arena for another bout of crazy challenges, strange happenings and altogether scandalous secrets. Yes, we can see you frothing... you just can't resist, can you?

CHUCKLESOME CHALLENGES

Are your old Mega Drive games starting to get you down? Well, if so, you may like to place a free advertisement in the next issue of MEGA (see page 83 of this issue). Before you put your game up for grabs, however, brush off the dust and give it one very last swan-song. Try our wacky challenges and then think up some of your own, because we want to hear them.

① SONIC

The game may now be a bit redundant, what with *Sonic 2* doing the rounds, but this little challenge should make you dig out the old version. ***Ben Blackburn*** (who wins a secret prize for his efforts) reckons that a good challenge would be to try to score over 150,000 points from all three acts on the Green Hill Zone. He can get 100,000 points from the time bonuses, so the feat is not impossible.

② QUACKSHOT

Tell you what, why don't we have a speed test this month? Starting from scratch try to get all the way through *Quackshot* in less than 62 minutes. There, that should keep you busy for a while.

③ THUNDERFORCE IV

Shoot-'em-ups don't come much tougher than this. So try, from the start, to get as many points as you can before losing a life. Our best score is around 300,000, but then we're good, aren't we?

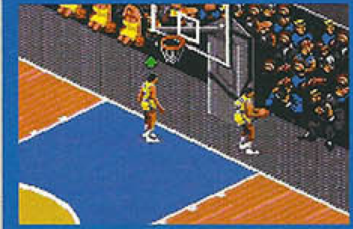
④ SPEEDBALL 2

Here's another test of human endeavour over console programming. Try to really trounce your opponent in a normal league match. Using Brutal Deluxe we've managed to beat the Renegades 354-20. For more of a challenge, try it against some of the better opponents.

⑤ DODGEBALL

We at MEGA kinda like this game, so if you've got it, try this challenge. Get through to the final of the knockout competition without losing more than five players. There, that should sort out the dodgers from the olivers.

WEIRD HAPPENINGS



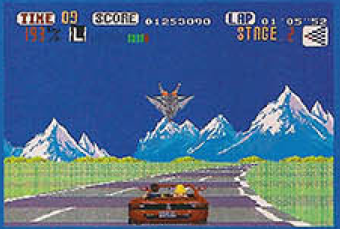
If you fancy running around the edge of the court without getting touched, read the tip on the right

① DAVID ROBINSON'S SUPREME COURT BASKETBALL

Thanks to *Simon Grime* from Hoddlesdon in Hertfordshire for sending in this little trick for *David Robinson's Supreme Court Basketball*. He says that when you get a side-line ball, pass out and then quickly pass back to the player standing off-court. Now using the player off court, you can run up and down the side of the court without getting touched by a defender. From here you can set up many scoring chances.

② OUT RUN

This is a strange one indeed, but it's definitely worth it if you want to get more out of the game. Make sure you're playing the game on any level other than Easy and start as normal. Now drive all the way through to the second checkpoint without touching any cars or crashing into the scenery. When you pass through the checkpoint, you should see either a Sega airship, a Galaxy Force, Star Fighter or Afterburner plane waiting for you. Reset the game and go to the options screen and you should now be able to select the Hyper difficulty level. Thanks go to *Ben Smith* from Naphill in High Wycombe for that one.



Er, excuse me Mr Pilot, but I don't suppose you could give me a lift to the next checkpoint, could you? I mean, you are travelling at a good 500 mph, and I do need some help

CRAZY CODES

Just to show you that the Game Genie is capable of a lot more than just giving you infinite lives, and following up on last month's amazing *Sonic* code, we've got some more wild, wacky and downright silly codes for you to try.

BATMAN

Enter AKEA AA4J on the original *Batman* game, and as soon as you get hit by someone or something you'll turn invisible and you'll also be invincible. You'll be able to tell where you are, because of all the activity that takes place around you.

PAC-MANIA

If mazes are more your thing and you've got a copy of *Pac-Mania*, then enter KBFA ATK2 and you'll stop the ghosts from coming out of their home. You can now walk around the maze without any hassle whatsoever.

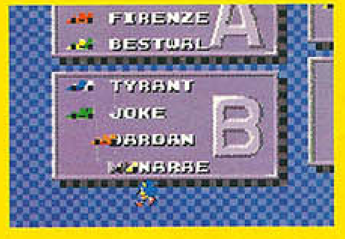
Once you've used these codes, why don't you try and come up with a few of your own? We want silly codes, as well as serious ones. And what do you get for your hard work? Well, thanks to those guys at Hornby, the sender of the best Game Genie code each month wins a game of their choice.

So, get working and get writing. This time next month your cart collection could be just that little bit bigger.

SEGA SECRETS

① SUPER HYDLIDE

If you've finished this very heavy RPG but would like to show off and see the end sequence again, then do the following. Start the game over again, exit the City of the Forest and go all the way to the left to where you got the $10,000 at the beginning of the game. Go into the other building (to the right of where you heard all the sounds in the game), and you'll be able to see the ending all over again.



Enter a new world championship in *Super Monaco GP2*, choose a rival and then keep an eye out for Sonic

② SUPER MONACO GP 2

Strangely enough we received this Sega secret from three different people on the same day. Thanks therefore go to *G Guest* from London, *David Swan* from Camberley and *Wei Ping* from Halesworth. Enter a new world championship in *Super Monaco GP 2* and choose a rival. When the cars appear on screen, you can see Sonic running from right to left across the bottom of the screen. You'll have to watch carefully or you'll miss it. The little blue hedgehog really does get everywhere, doesn't he?

THE SECRET OF SUCCESS...

... is to send in your wacky challenges, weird happenings and Sega surprises to MEGA. You could well be successful for two reasons. Firstly, you could get your name in print in everyone's favourite Mega Drive magazine (that's MEGA, that is), and secondly, you may succeed in winning a mystery ARENA prize.

Send your special little something or somethings to: ARENA, MEGA, Future Publishing, Beauford Court, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon, BA1 2BW.

Sharing your secrets has never before been so lucrative, so get writing...

JOHN MADDEN FOOTBALL '93

It's the best game money can buy (in MEGA's opinion), but unless you're a serious American football fan, the strategy elements may well be lost on you. That's why MEGA's gonna tell you exactly what's what. Read on...

PUBLISHER: Electronic Arts

PRICE: £39.99

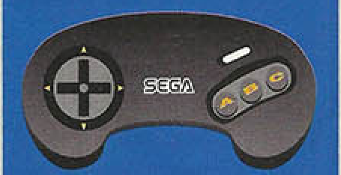
RELEASED: December '92

MEGA SAYS:
This is the best game money can buy. It may be American football, but for sheer playability and two-player head-to-head thrills, *John Madden Football '93* has no equal. This is the third version of a game which just keeps getting better and better.

Now, obviously *John Madden '93* is not a game that's going to have built-in infinite lives or even infinite continues for that matter. So, the only way we can really tip this game is by telling you which are the best plays to use and when to use them.

We've played the game through and have managed to completely annihilate the computer using the following tips (even Andy won the final). The best thing about these general tips, however, it that they work on the '92 version of the game as well. How about that then?

GET A GRIP!



⬅➡⬆⬇ Moves the players around the pitch

Ⓐ Passes to player A, dives, selects a play box or calls an audible

Ⓑ Passes to player B, spins out of a tackle, selects a play box or fakes a snap

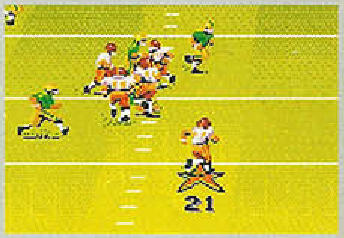
Ⓒ Passes to player C, charges through, selects a play box or snaps the ball

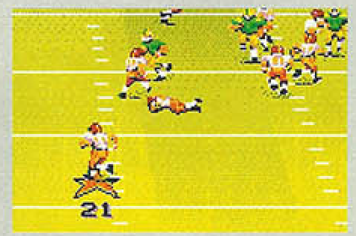
TOP SEVEN RUNNING PLAYS

All these plays automatically pass, so there is a strong element of surprise. The best running team is Buffalo, although number 20 for Detroit is by far the best running back.

① NORMAL, HB TOSS RIGHT

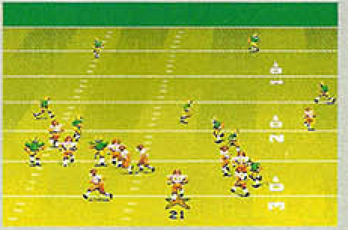
As with the Pro Form, Cross Pass passing play (see number 3 over the page), this play is best used when the ball is over to the left-hand side of the field. Snap the ball, and guide the running back along to the right and then up the side of the defence. Use C to gain those extra few yards and, if you're feeling lucky, use B to spin out of a few tackles.





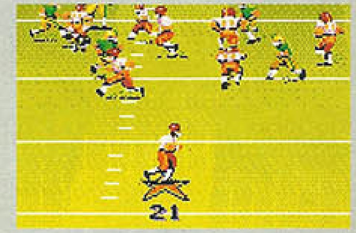
② PRO FORM, HB TOSS LEFT/SHOTGUN, HB TOSS LEFT

This play works in the same way as the previous one, but on the other side. You may find this setting more useful, however, because it gives you the ball faster than a Pro Form set-up. Unfortunately, it also leaves you more open to an attack.



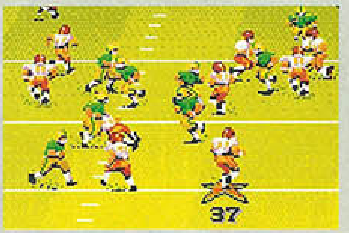
③ PRO FORM, HB TOSS PASS

This is the same play as used in the passing top ten (see number 7 over the page), and it really is a very good running play. When the Pro Form, HB Toss Pass is used properly you can run straight up and through, and by using the B button you can dodge quite a few tackles.



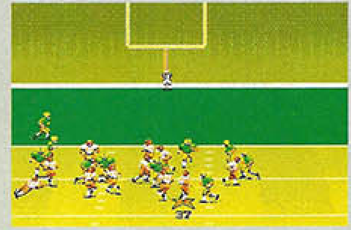
④ FAR, HB OPTION

If you like nothing better than completely fooling the defence, then this play is for you. You send them all the wrong way so that you are then left to stroll up the left-hand side while the defence follow everyone else up the right side – until they see you, that is.



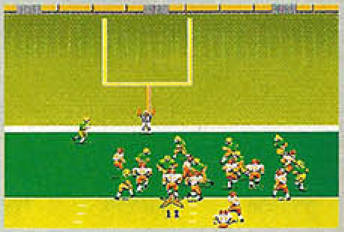
⑤ RUN AND SHOOT, FB DRAW

If you're near the goal-line and you want to run it in from there, then the next three plays are the best to use. They also work if you're after those extra yards for a first down. The FB Draw opens up a gap in the middle, and you can walk right through. Be warned that this play takes a while to master.



⑥ GOAL-LINE, FB PULL

This running play is definitely effective when you're within five yards of the goal-line. Snap to the right and then run right, moving closer to the line all the time. When you see the line, dive for it. If this sounds a bit too simplistic for your liking, then try the Goal-Line, QB Sneak for a real challenge.

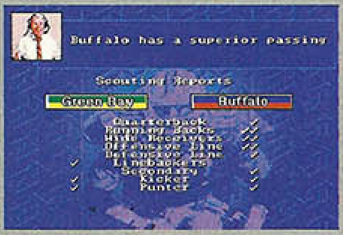


⑦ GOAL-LINE, QB SNEAK

Nobody likes a good quarterback when he's on an opposing team, and he's even less popular if he scores a touchdown. If you want to be that talented quarterback and there are five yards or less to go, then try the QB Sneak. Just follow your line-men straight through and dive towards that line.

TOP TEN PASSING PLAYS

If passing is your game, here are, in no particular order, the ten best plays you can use. Obviously you're going to have to be more accurate if you're playing with a crap team, but ideally you want to be using either Washington or San Francisco. Both these teams have the quarterbacks and wide receivers which will make the most out of these plays.

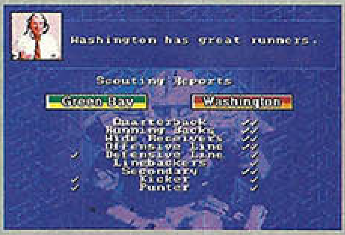


Buffalo has a superior passing

Scouting Reports

Green Bay		Buffalo
	Quarterback	✓
	Running Backs	✓✓
	Wide Receivers	✓✓
	Offensive line	✓✓
	Defensive Line	✓
✓	Linebackers	
	Secondary	✓
✓	Kicker	✓
✓	Punter	✓

If running is your game, then Buffalo is the team for you

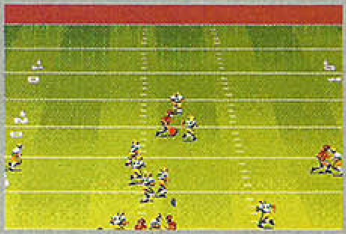


Washington has great runners.

Scouting Reports

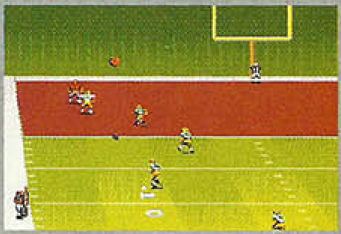
Green Bay		Washington
	Quarterback	✓✓
	Running Backs	✓✓
	Wide Receivers	✓✓
	Offensive line	✓✓
✓	Defensive Lane	✓
	Linebackers	✓
	Secondary	✓✓
✓	Kicker	✓
✓	Punter	✓

However, Washington has the best players for a passing game



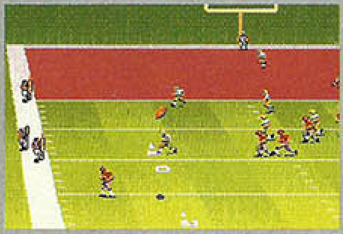
① SHOTGUN, FLOOD RIGHT TO RECEIVER B

This play sends your receiver straight up the middle of the field. The best way to operate this play is to take a snap, and then quickly, one or two seconds later, pass. Now run upwards to your spot and catch the ball. Sometimes you can break away and make a run – 46 yards from one play is possible.



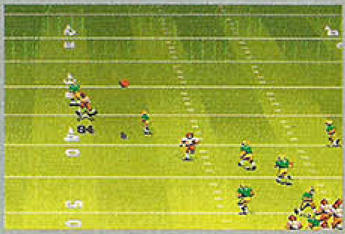
② RUN AND SHOOT, UP HOOK TO RECEIVER A

If you're after some serious yardage, then the run and shoot plays definitely pay the best dividends. Of these the Up Hook play is the best. Use the display windows to see when receiver A is in the clear, and then let one fly. Sometimes you can get over forty yards from a well-timed Up Hook.



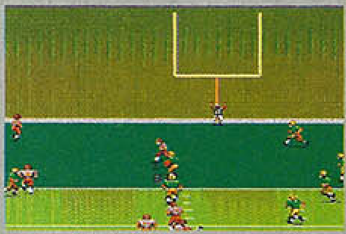
③ PRO-FORM, CROSS PASS TO RECEIVER A

This play is best used when the ball is leaning towards the right-hand side of the field, and it almost always guarantees a first down. Snap the ball and let the receiver to your left run across. Now pass, and position him. Catch the ball and run straight up the field just inside the sideline. Dive if you need to get the first down.



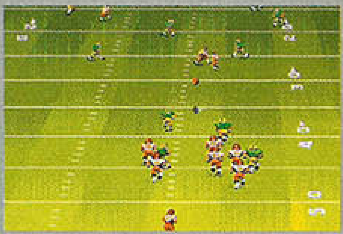
④ FAR, HB SCREEN TO RECEIVER B

The next two plays should really only be used when you're trying to score a touchdown and you're within 20 yards of the goal-line. (If you're over 20 yards away, then use any of the other plays to push you further up-field.) Again, this play relies on a quick snap followed by an equally quick pass to work best. Pull this one off properly and you can run home for a touchdown.



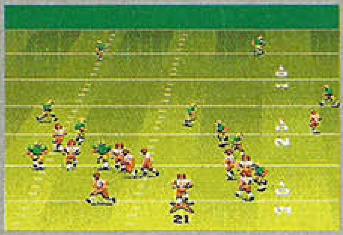
⑤ GOAL-LINE, PLAY ACTION TO RECEIVER B OR C

You'd be better off using this play instead of the HB Screen if you're about ten yards out. For the play to work at its best, try faking the defence by guiding your QB over to the left-hand side of the field before passing to the right-hand side and then sending the receiver of your choice off up-field to make a first down (hopefully).



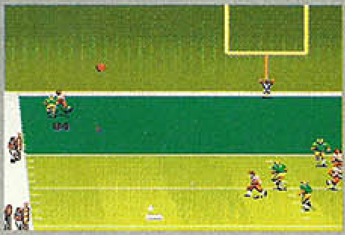
⑥ RUN AND SHOOT, POST UP TO RECEIVER A, B OR C

Another stonking Run and Shoot play. If you like variety in your play choice (showing off to mates in other words), then this is another excellent way to get some yardage or even get six more points. This play also has the advantage of using all the receivers, so no-one really knows which one you're going to pass to.



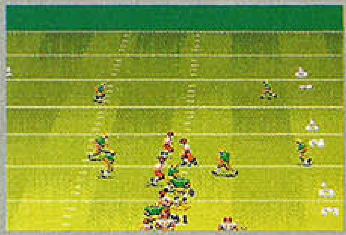
⑦ PRO FORM, HB TOSS PASS

This is a good play for two reasons. The first is that, your QB acts as a dummy by passing straight to the running back, and the second is that you can then use your running back as a quarterback. All in all, it's a very useful play indeed.



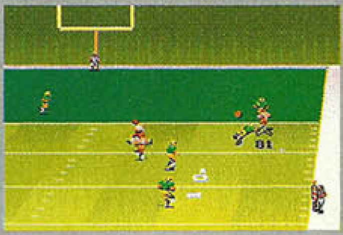
⑧ GOAL-LINE, FLOOD LEFT/RIGHT TO RECEIVER A, B OR C

This is not as useful as the other two goaling attacks, but it is still a good play. Snap the ball and give a quick throw to any receiver. Complete the procedure by using the Goal-Line, FB Pull to dive for the line.



⑨ PRO FORM, DOWN AND OUT TO RECEIVERS B OR C

This is another variety play, which is no better or worse than any of the others shown here. However, if you're bored of beating the computer in the same way every time, this is worth a go.



⑩ SHOTGUN, HAIL MARY TO RECEIVERS A, B OR C

This is strictly a comedy play (that is if you think watching all your players run up the pitch is funny). Snap, pull back, wait for ten seconds and then let go for a one in a million chance of making some yardage.

KICKING BOOTS AT THE READY?

You may be able to score six points every time with a touchdown, but to be the complete all-rounder you need to know how to kick.

Kick offs, punts, extra points and field goals all need to be done differently. They're not amazingly different to each other, but there are slight subtle changes.

It's in the air and should go straight through the posts

KICK OFFS – The on-side kick is best, but don't kick with full power otherwise you'll kick too far.

PUNTS – If you can punt out of bounds, then your opponents don't get a chance to run back with the ball.

EXTRA POINTS – These are incredibly simple to get really. Just snap the ball, choose about half power, and it should sail through.

FIELD GOAL – The distance you are from the posts effects how much wind you have to take into account. Never take a Field Goal from more than 25 yards out.

The on-side kick – now run down the pitch and tackle 'em

HELLFIRE

The toughest shoot-'em-up you can buy gets the full Rip 'n' Tip treament

PUBLISHER: Sega

PRICE: £39.99

RELEASED: July '92

MEGA SAYS:
This has been out on Jap import for nearly two years, but now you can get it officially. It's not the best looking game in the world, but with great gameplay and heart-stopping action, your money can't buy a better shoot-'em-up. Go on, try it. You might like it.

It may not be the best looking shoot-'em-up around, but for sheer toughness and playability, *Hellfire* has no equal. So MEGA's going to take you through the game stage by stage to show you what's what.

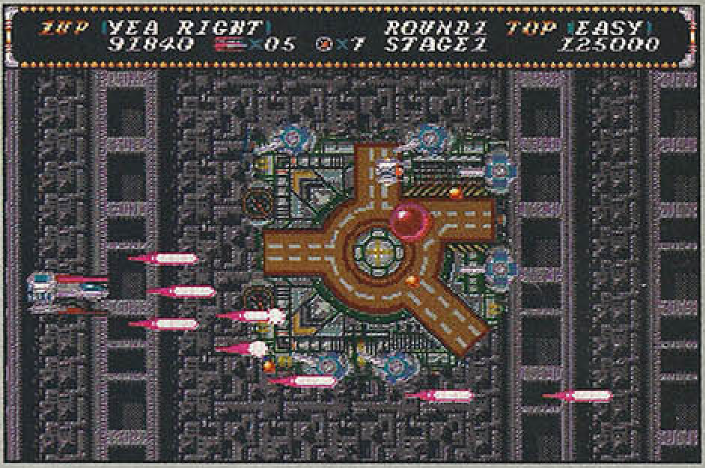
The surprising thing about *Hellfire* is that while being very easy to get into and play, the later levels, particularly levels five and six, are very tough. The levels themselves aren't that much of a problem, but end-of-level bosses are tough cookies.

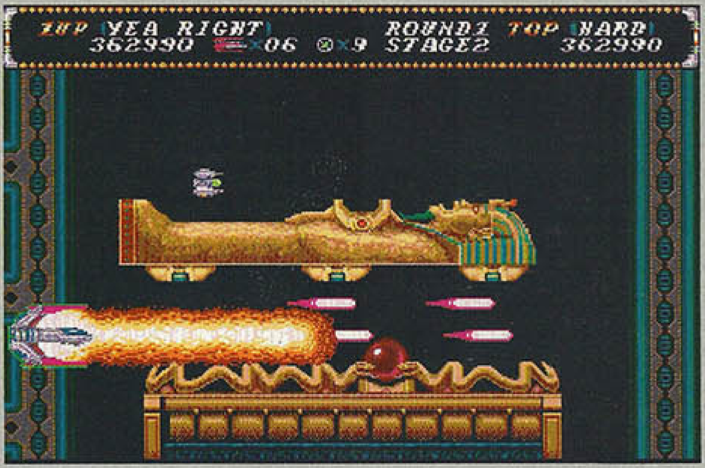
You may also be interested to know that there are three different end sequences. And you thought that there were only two different levels! Well, take a look at the SECRET BOX on page 72 to find out exactly what we're talking about. Enough of this wibble though, let's get on with the game, shall we?

BASE ONE: HOGGR, THE FROZEN STAR

Because this is the first level, it's not that difficult. It's all about speed and quick use of your four-directional weapons. Basically, this level gives you a chance to get used to the way in which your ship handles before things start hotting up later. There is a mid-level boss, but he's pretty harmless.

The real boss, however, means it's time to get serious. When it appears, you'll see the gun turrets that sit on all four sides. Take out the front two turrets, then the side ones and finally the back ones. Now concentrate on the ball in the middle. As you hit it, it moves around the inside of the ship, so be patient and follow it around until you destroy it. Don't waste any time either, because the ship starts to fire at you if you don't get on top of the situation quickly enough.





BASE TWO: QAT, THE DESERT

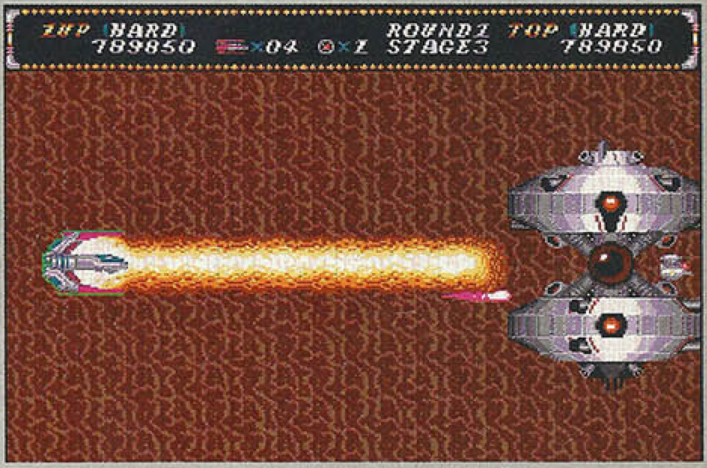
Prepare to meet your mummy! This level is full of Egyptian feeling, and the end-of-level boss completely gives the game away. The mummy is protecting its flashing ball, which is surrounded by casing. Fly up and around the casing until you're directly above the hole. Now, by using your fire button, blast away. The casing will lift off and it'll fly towards you. Go to the right-hand side of the screen, and then fly underneath the casing.

Now concentrate on the ball and then, as it comes back down, move to the left and fire. You should now have hit it enough times to blow it up. If not, then why not finish it off with a Hellfire? These come in very useful as times like these. This procedure does take a bit of practice to perfect, but it's not that hard.

BASE THREE: SYRINX, THE TROPICS

This is a really long level and having middle level bosses doesn't much help matters. The trick to defeating the mid-level boss is to concentrate on one at a time (it's split into three pieces you see), and use your multi-directional fire. Don't worry unduly, because they're not too tough to blow up. The end-of-level boss doesn't exactly tax your brain either, but its firepower is awesome. Aim straight ahead at the flashing ball and move with the pattern of the ship. A couple of Hellfires (if you've got them) come in pretty useful as well.

One tip worth remembering is that when you use your Hellfire, it actually takes off all the other bullets on screen. This is very useful if you're in a tight corner and there doesn't seem to be a way out.



GET A GRIP!

← → ↑ ↓ Moves the ship around the screen

Ⓐ Fires your currently selected weapon – hold down for rapid fire

Ⓑ This cycles through your weapon direction – easy when you know how

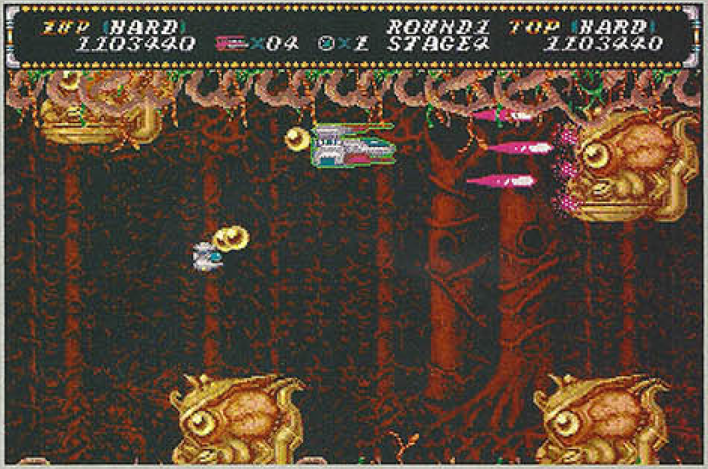
Ⓒ The ultimate weapon of destruction – the Hellfire

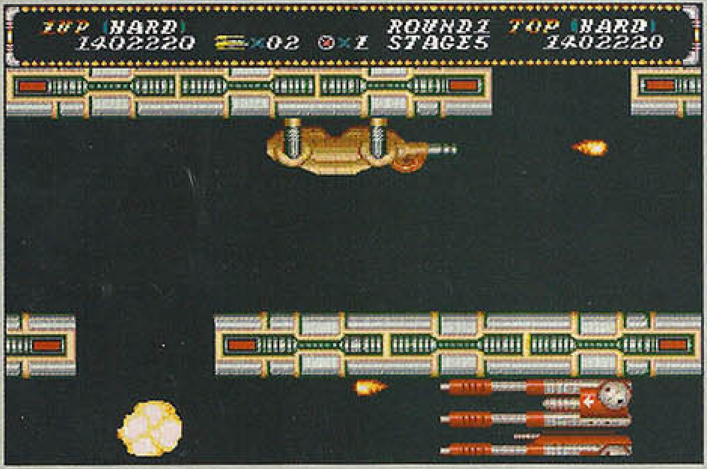
RIP 'N' TIP

BASE FOUR: LODUR, THE FOREST

The scenery on this level is probably the best in the game, but you can't spend all your time looking around. Getting through this level is very tough, especially the water section. The end-of-level boss is very tough too and unless you know what's coming up, you're gonna be in for a bit of a shock.

When the boss appears, you'll see four faces. Fire at them and watch them split up and revolve around the screen. Stay in the middle of the screen, but watch out for them when they get in front of you because they'll fire fireballs. Dodge these (they're not really that difficult to avoid) and keep firing. It does take some time to get it to work properly, but stick with it, because it's the only way to defeat the bad guys.





BASE FIVE: URD, THE FACTORY

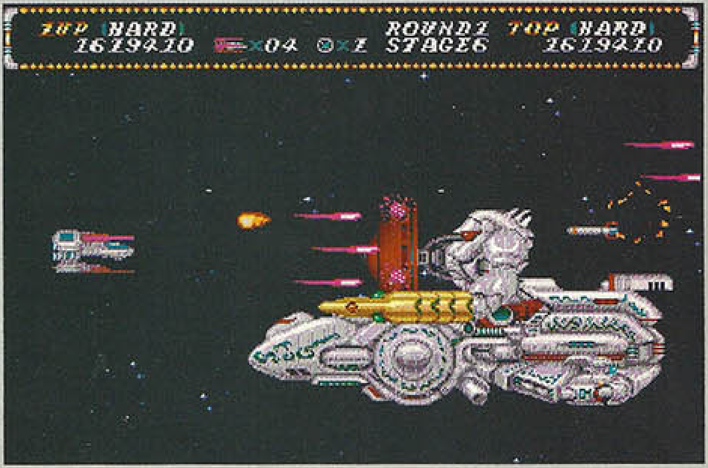
This is the "techie" level and it's all very futuristic. The pods that move along the floor have two power ups in them, so you've got plenty of chances to get some serious weaponry if you happen to die. There are plenty of other places to pick up power ups as well, and it's sensible to pick them up while you've got the chance, because you *will* need them later on.

The end of the level is tough, because the game scrolls vertically downwards and there's a gap that you have to fly through. This gap alternates from left to right and you have to fire forwards and backwards. You can control the scroll slightly by pushing up on the joypad, but you can't stop it completely. If you're fully powered up, you should have no problems.

BASE SIX: PHOLUS, THE GIANT

This is the last level (phew!), and things are really tough. There are about three different mid-level bosses and more than one of each kind. You'll know when you're getting to the end, because things get incredibly difficult. The toughest bit is when the screen speeds up and big missiles fire at you. Just stay in the same position and fire straight ahead. When the last boss appears in his white ship, you'd better get ready for some serious shooting.

This boss's telescopic arm is deadly, and you need to concentrate your firing on its head when its shield is down. Fire either straight on or from the top. It's going to take loadsa hits to finish this one off, but stick with it for the most worthwhile (well, it is the very last) end sequence.

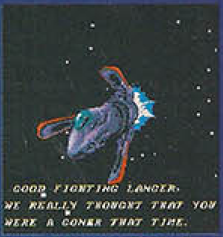


SECRET BOX

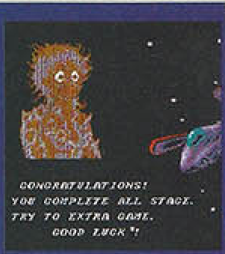
As with most games, *Hellfire* has its fair share of cheats and tricks. Before you get into the cheats and tips though, you might like to know that *Hellfire* has three (count 'em) different endings.

There's a different ending for both the EASY and HARD levels, but to be the best you need to finish it on YEA RIGHT level (to select Yea Right level, look at the cheat on the right). And if you can get all the way through YEA RIGHT level, you really are a mean gamesplayer. It's very tough, but it's worth it in the end.

This is what you get when you finish EASY...


GOOD FIGHTING LANCER.
WE REALLY THOUGHT THAT YOU
WERE A GONER THAT TIME.

But finish HARD for a better ending...

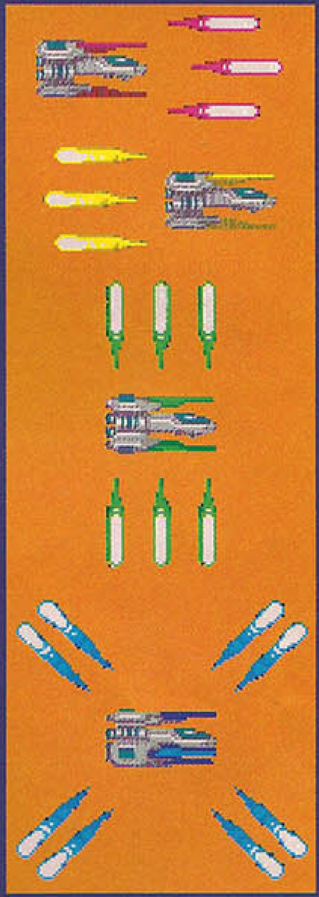

CONGRATULATIONS!
YOU COMPLETE ALL STAGE.
TRY TO EXTRA GAME.
GOOD LUCK !

And YEA RIGHT gives you a really funny ending

WEAPONS

Weapons, eh? What would we do without them? Well for one, the games wouldn't be called shoot-'em-ups, would they?

Seriously though, *Hellfire* has multi-directional firepower and it's not just here for effect. Get used to the control system and remember in which order the weapons appear. Not easy, so here's a run-down (in order) of all the weapons. There, that should be helpful.



CHEATS

This cheat isn't easy to master, but it does work. It depends on pressing the right button at the right time. Work through to the end of level one and kill the boss. As it disappears from the screen, press the Hellfire button (C) and then press it again when the boss has gone. If the cheat has worked, the screen will go yellow and then level two will start. You should now be invincible, but if you press button C again, you'll lose your power. It is fiddly, but persevere because it's worth it.

ACTION REPLAY CODES

Infinite lives – FF006 70003
Infinite Hellfires – FF006 90002

There, that should help you finish the game.

99 CONTINUES

If you fancy jumping straight into the YEA RIGHT, then go to the options menu and select hard. Listen to Sound Test 01 for over a minute and the game will automatically start on YEA RIGHT level. Oh, and it gives you 99 continues as well. Not bad, huh?

STRIDER

An arcade-perfect conversion of a classic (but tough) coin-op. Now it's busted...

Level select. When the master laughs before the start of the game, hold Down on the joypad and press the following buttons in order: A, C, B, C and then A again. A level select option will now be displayed.

PUBLISHER: Sega

PRICE: £39.99

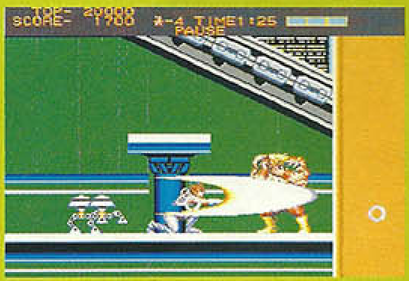
RELEASE: June '91

MEGA SAYS:
At its time of release (just before the original *Sonic The Hedgehog*) *Strider* set new graphical standards – the "running down the hill" bit still gets the heart thumping. But now it's the game's sleek, professional version of the original coin-op and first-rate level design (yet to be bettered, Neil reckons) that make this a classic.

ROUND ONE – KAZAFU

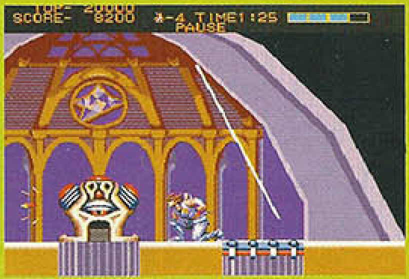
Head all the way right. When you get to the chasm, jump and somersault over it. Continue to the right, and when you reach the next chasm, jump in it to be faced by the first boss, Strobaya.

STROBAYA



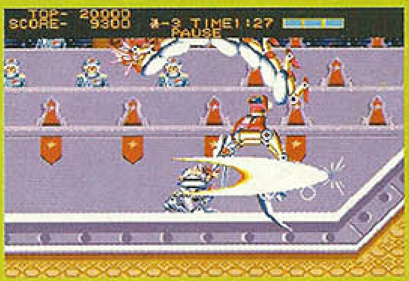
To defeat him, stand directly under the platform, and continuously swing your sword at him. When you've done him in, stand under the platform so you won't get burned. Jump up twice and continue to the right, to the peak. Once there, wait for the flying creatures, then get the container. Destroy the creatures, pick up the containers, then continue right. When you reach a dead-end, swing your sword to the left, to make the wall disappear. Walk to the left, and wait for Novo to appear.

NOVO



To defeat this creature, duck down to the right of it, and continuously swing your sword at it. Then move to the right, and you will fall down a ledge. While falling, swing the sword to the left, and take out the creature firing at you. When you reach a dead-end, jump and grab the ledge above you, then continue right (after you're on top of the ledge), to be faced with Urobolos.

UROBOLOS

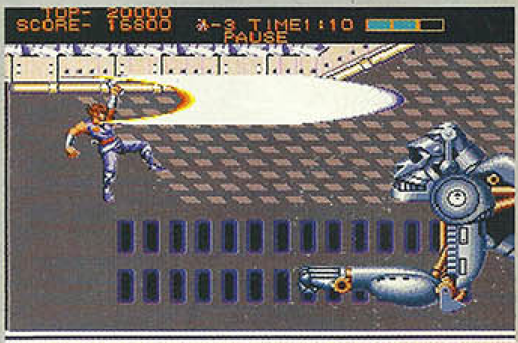


Wait for him to appear, then jump and hit him in the head. If you miss, or he doesn't die, jump over his head to get on top of his body. Once there, continuously hit his head until he is defeated. If you have any robots with you when you face him, he will be much easier to beat!

ROUND TWO – SIBERIA

Move to the right and pick up the item containers. Continue right and turn right before the wall closes, do the sliding attack under it (if you don't make it, either wait for your sword to return to its normal size, or stand back from the wall, and hit it until it explodes, then slide under it). Once past the wall, you will be faced with Mecha Pon.

MECHA PON

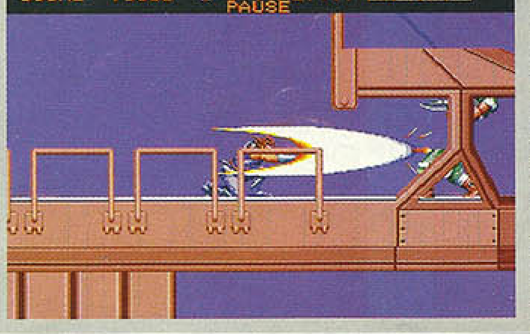


Assuming you don't have a giant metal banana, you'll need to kill him. So, jump to the ceiling (if you have the long sword) and continuously hit him. If you don't have the long sword, stand in front of him and swing your sword as fast as you can. Eventually, he will explode.

Once he is defeated, jump up onto the ceiling, and make your way to the right and up. Look out for the creepers along the wall, and destroy them before they do the same to you. Once you reach the top, take out any snipers and move to the left. When you see a teeter totter, get on the top and shoot towards the right. You will find that you can hit the containers on the spinning gears. Once you hit one, drop down to pick it up, then get back up on top of the teeter totter again. Repeat this until you've got all the containers. Once all the containers are gone, jump up to the left, and hang from the stairs. Take them all the way to the top, then wait for a gear to come around, drop on it, then stand on top of it and immediately jump up to the ledge above you. Jump up again and you will be on the peak of a mountain.

To defeat the guy there, jump, and at the last possible second, swing your sword to hit him. Don't swing too soon, because he will move and you won't have hit him. He is actually pretty hard to beat, so keep trying.

Once he is defeated, *run* down the side of the mountain (don't jump or stop), and when you reach the bottom, jump across the chasm to the other side. Then continue to the right, until you see a ledge that you can get up on. Memorise this area. Be careful not to get hit by lightning when the screen turns black. There's an extra life on the far left side of the screen. The exit is at the top, right above one of those bird-like creatures. Stand there, and wait for a transport to appear. Jump up on the transport, take out the enemy, and pick up the container. Do this two or three more times, and it will lead you to a ship in the sky. Jump up right next to the giant fan, and jump to the left over the little fans (perfect timing will get you over them, with no damage). Then when you reach the ledge that goes up and down, jump up to the ledge above you and hang there. Move to the right, and take out the gun, and wait for the Kuniang Martial Arts Thugs to attack.



KUNIANG MARTIAL ARTS THUGS

Continue hanging where you took out the gun, swing your sword, and you will eventually take out all of the thugs (they run into your sword).

Then make your way to the right, and take out the door and the thug who's behind the door.

ROUND THREE – BALLOG

Move to the right, destroying the Eliminators. When you get to the top of the hill, do the sliding attack to avoid being hit by the cannon bullets. Then hit the wall to the right to make a hole. Drop down to the area with moving platforms, and continue down and to the right. When you see a hole in the ship, jump on the platform and take it all the way to the right. Then take the platforms up to the top of the screen. Look out for the laser shooters towards the top of the screen.

Once at the top of the screen, jump up and you will be above the ledge, facing a bird-like creature. Kill the creature and immediately jump up on the wall that is pushing you. Go all the way up to the top, and continue to hold Up on the control pad. Eventually, a hole in the roof will open, allowing you to climb the wall. When the wall gets close enough to jump, jump left and right until you reach the top. Once at the top, you will be faced with Slingshot. Kill him, and continue to the right. When you reach the wall, hit it and it will disappear and you will be in the Chamber of Horrors. Continue to the right and you will reach the Inversion Chamber. Avoid the grenades while continuing to the right. At the end of the Inversion Chamber, you will climb down a hole and be faced with Ballog's Secret Device.

BALLOG'S SECRET DEVICE

To defeat this enemy, jump and get a few "free" hits in, and wait for it to suck you in. Continue hitting it while you are orbiting around this huge creature. Eventually, it will throw you against the wall. At this time pick up the container at the bottom of the screen which contains a "Hi-symbol" (fills life gauge by one). Then wait for the creature to come around again, and jump up and hit it until it explodes. It takes approximately fourteen hits to defeat. This guy takes a lot of practice, so don't give up!

Once he is defeated, drop down to the bottom of the chamber and there will now be a hole. Run down the hole and to the right, and at the last possible second, jump and land on the edge. Then jump up and hang from the bottom of the ship and continue to the right. When you see enemies above you, get up there and destroy them, and jump onto the moving platform (like the ones in round two) with Captain Beard on it, and destroy him.

TOP- 32600
SCORE- 32600
TIME
PAUSE

ROUND FOUR – THE AMAZON

Run to the right and continue to run over the bridge. Continue right and jump onto the vine. Continue all the way right, picking up as many container boxes as possible. Climb the wall on the far right, and then continue left to the platform that looks like a vine. Jump up and go all the way to the right. When you reach the down side of a mountain, run down it, and about half way down jump onto the vine. Then, go all the way to the right and when you reach the end of the vine, jump and somersault onto the tail of a dinosaur. Walk to the right on the dino's back, and when you reach his head, jump and somersault to the next dinosaur. Walk about half way across the dinosaur and it will disappear, and you will be faced with Lago.

GET A GRIP!

Ⓐ Ⓑ Ⓒ

↑ ↓ ← → Hiryu walks, climbs, crouches and poses

Ⓐ No function

Ⓑ Strider swings his enormous plasma sword. Wow, what a hero!

Ⓒ Strider jumps

LAGO

To defeat Lago, stand right in front of him. Before he spikes you, jump and hit him on the head. Do this twice and he should be a goner. But, if you'd rather live life on the edge (probably a bad idea at this stage of the game), take a risk by jumping through his legs and attempting your attack from behind.

ROUND FIVE – THE THIRD MOON

Start off by killing the bird-like creature. Continue all the way right, killing everything. When you see white vines, take out the creatures and continue right. Eventually, jump and grab the ceiling and you will turn upside down. Continue right, and take out the spiders. Walk on the spear, and jump and grab the ceiling. Then avoid the spears coming from the ceiling, while moving right. When you reach the end of the ceiling, you will be faced with Ballog (Part Two).

TOP- 78050
SCORE- 78050
TIME 1:19
PAUSE

BALLOG (PART TWO)

Basically, use the same technique as you did with the first Ballog. It might be a good idea to walk around the perimeter, and take out the spiders first. Then go after Ballog. He takes 20-25 shots to destroy.

Once destroyed, drop down the hole (where the container was before), and hold Right on the control pad. You will land on a ledge with a container on it. Pick up the container and walk to the right. Drop down and pick up the long sword container. Stand with Hiryu's left foot on the first grey pillar, duck down and continuously shoot at Nono. Continue to the right, taking out the bird-like creatures. Then you will be faced with a creature like the one in round two (at the top of the mountains). Take him out as quickly as possible, then continue right. Take out the bird-like creature, and continue right. You will then be faced with a dinosaur, and Mecha Pon (Part Two).

TIME 1:27
PAUSE

MECHA PON (PART TWO)

Basically the same guy (re-welded together, presumably – either that or it's his evil twin brother) as old Mecha from level one. Just keep swinging your sword at him. He'll hit you every once in a while, so the faster you destroy him, the better. Ignore the dinosaur!

Once they are destroyed, there will be a lightning bolt over you.

TOP-
SCORE- 86450
TIME 1:10
PAUSE

LAGO (PART TWO)

Lure the lightning bolt to the far left of the platform by walking to the very far left side of the platform. Then as Lago appears, run right, grab the long sword and start attacking Lago from behind. Because you've now got plenty of room to back-pedal (he'll keep advancing towards you), you can attack him while keeping out of harm's way. He'll die quickly and easily. Sorted.

TOP- 90450
SCORE- 90450
TIME 1:45
PAUSE

「余は、この都市を天空へ打ちあげ
地球上の生物を 全て焼き殺して
くれる。」

UROBOLOS (PART TWO)

Once he is defeated, another lightning bolt will appear. When Urobolos appears, jump on his back. The more you jump around on him the less you will fall. When he turns around, jump and grab the portion of his body above you to stop you falling. Once you reach the second ledge with a red spike, kill Urobolos with blows to the head. Then you'll meet the final boss.

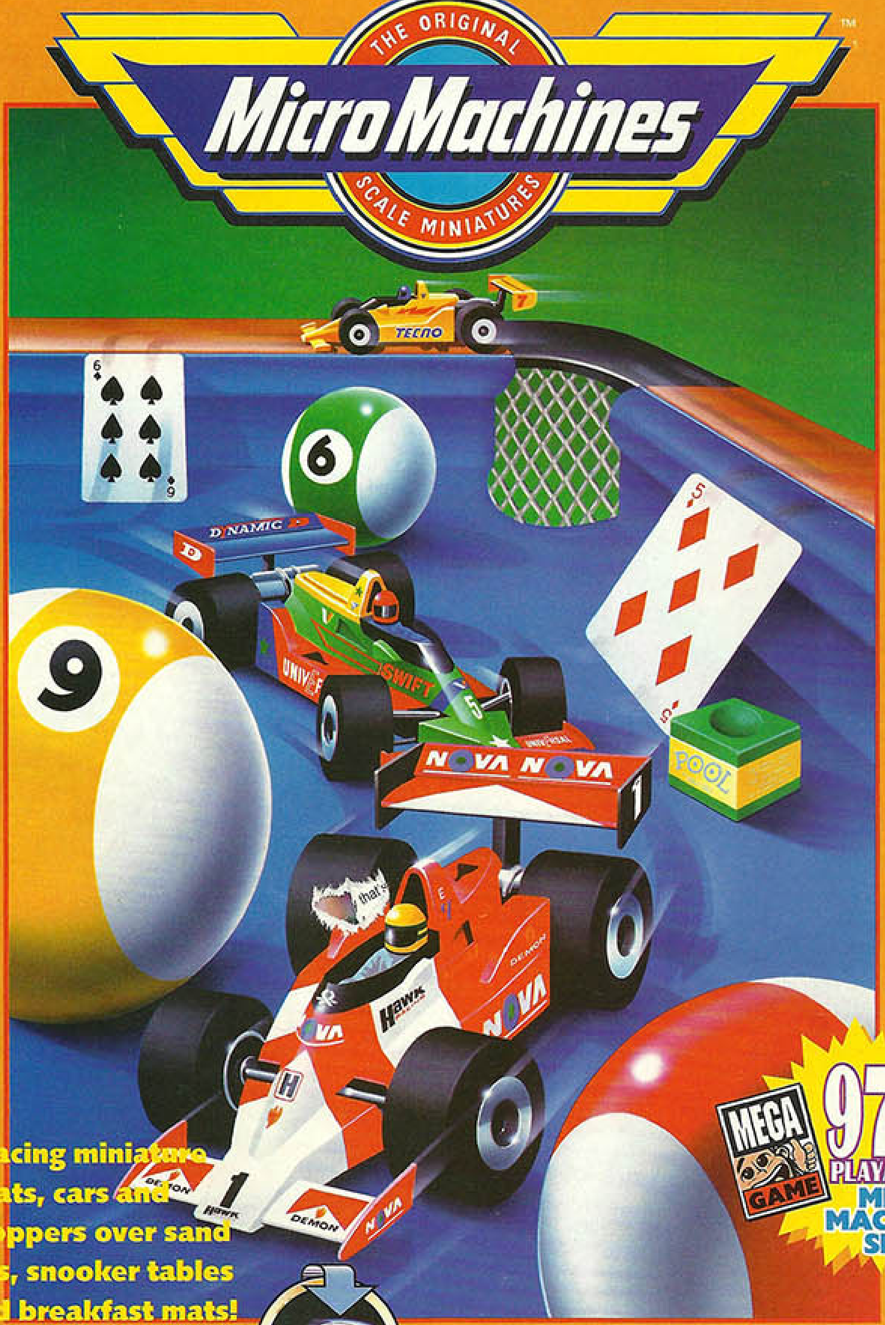
TOP-
SCORE-
TIME

GRAND MASTER MEIO

To defeat him, jump up and go to the left. You will find a long sword in a container box there. Duck down and swing at Grand Master Meio with the long sword. He will hit you a few times, but if you are fast with the buttons, you will defeat him before he hits you. And if you defeat him, you have succeeded in reaching the end of the game. Well done!

"ONE OF THE BEST 2-PLAYER MEGADRIVE GAMES EVER!"

Said Mean Machines' Radion playing Micro Machines. He likes it.



"Racing miniature boats, cars and choppers over sand pits, snooker tables and breakfast mats! It may sound weird but it's hellish addictive! Dodge orange juice stains, jump over playing cards and into snooker pockets - simply brilliant!"
N-Force

MEGA GAME 97% PLAYABILITY MEAN MACHINES SEGA

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TOTAL! 92% MEGA ZONE 92% PLAYABILITY N-FORCE MEGA GAME

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MEGA TOP 100 CARTS • MEGA TOP 100 CARTS • MEGA TOP 100 CARTS • MEGA
TOP
100

This month's Top 100 may look a bit smaller than the last one (if you want to know what made MEGA's January instalment so huge, get a back issue – see page 85), but it still holds a wealth of information. If this is the first time you've bought the mag, then here they are – MEGA's controversial top 100 Mega Drive games of all time. If you're a regular reader, don't write off the next eight pages, instead check out the new games which have been slotted into the system, the latest readers' ads and three more past master reviews...

1. JOHN MADDEN FOOTBALL '93 (INC. MADDEN AND MADDEN '92)

Publisher: EASN
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 3 of MEGA

43 YARD PUNT
#27 RETURNS
41 YARD GAIN

The third version of the best game on your Mega Drive and it's been improved upon again. If you're fed up with playing through the normal teams, try your hand against the best teams of all time. There are eight Superbowl-winning sides to play against and you can even enter the best of the best playoff to see who is ultimately the best.

John Madden Football '93 has all the playability of the other two versions and more. One word of caution though: if you own either the original *John Madden American Football* or *John Madden '92*, don't buy this version expecting a whole new game.

MEGA says: The best just got better, but not by that much.

FOR SALE: *John Madden Football*
£20 – 0483 715707
FOR SALE: *John Madden '92*
£20 – 05512 2778
FOR SALE: *John Madden '93*
£25 – 0244 300315

2. SONIC THE HEDGEHOG 2

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 2 of MEGA

Hey, you want top grade video game entertainment? Then you got it. This game has fast, smooth colourful graphics, top sound and playability that would make most game programmers' eyes water. Even if you do finish it, you've still got the two-player races and all those time challenges to have a go at. What is the fastest time possible for the Emerald Hill Zone act one?

MEGA says: You might find it too easy to finish, but it does leave the original sobbing in a damp corner.

TO SWAP: *Sonic The Hedgehog 2*
£20 – 0244 300315
FOR SALE: *Sonic The Hedgehog 2*
(USA) £20 – 061 330 1862

3. NHLPA HOCKEY (INC. EA HOCKEY)

Publisher: EASN
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 1 of MEGA

Just as *John Madden '93* remained firmly fixed to its predecessor's roots, so does this, and the new version is just as much a classic as the original.

The top-down scrolling viewpoint still works beautifully, and the gameplay is as perfect as you could ever hope for it to be. Mind you, just like in the real thing, the best bit is when the gloves come off and the punch-ups start. Not as involved as *John Madden Football*, and the naive or short-sighted player will tell you that scoring's more down to luck than skill, but for nerve-tingling tension that's absolutely second-to-none you still won't find a pulse-raiser much better (or tougher to master) than this.

MEGA says: Even better than the original (MEGA rated it 92% – it would have got more if it hadn't been a sequel). *NHLPA Hockey* is bigger, better and bloodier than its older brother, and it truly kicks. It is a fantastic game, which no Mega Drive owner should be without.

TO SWAP: *NHLPA Hockey*
021 705 2106
FOR SALE: *NHLPA Hockey*
£30 – 0244 300315
TO SWAP: *EA Hockey*
0942 35928
0582 468674

4. HELLFIRE

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99

Hellfire, the only serious competition to *Aero Blasters* in the space-blast department, is number one in a different field. If the Mega Drive's ever seen a more accurate coin-op conversion than this, we'd like to know what it is. A clever and imaginative shoot-'em-up, *Hellfire* makes you think before you zap with four switchable weapon systems which, if you're going to make any progress through the game, have to be employed with expert speed and accuracy. The end-of-level bosses have had a bit more thought put into their design than the usual "find the weak spot and sit and pummel it for a couple of minutes" routine, and the graphics change enough from level to level to make it a real joy to discover what's in store in each new stage. You get a lot of continues, which makes it a bit easy to complete, but hey – nothing's perfect.

MEGA says: Great stuff, although it pales a bit in the frenetic action department when you put it alongside *Aero Blasters*. If you find that one a bit too demanding, though, this'll be right up your street.

FOR SALE: *Hellfire*
(Jap) £20 – 0993 844434
£15 – 0603 665897
£20 – 0244 300315
TO SWAP: *Hellfire*
Swap plus £3 – 0522 510967

5. SUPER MONACO GP 2 (INC. SUPER MONACO GP)

Publisher: Sega
Price: £44.99

Right, we've had the sports game, the platform game and the shoot-'em-up. What's missing? Of course, the driving game! *Super Monaco GP* (Incidentally, does anyone else remember Sega's original Monaco GP arcade game? Nope, thought not.) was the most popular driving coin-op before *Out Run*, and the staggering graphics were thought by many to be completely impossible to simulate on a Mega Drive. And, indeed, they were, but disappointment turned to joy within seconds of loading this cart into the slot – the graphics may only be alright, but the gameplay is astonishing. Superb, definable control, high-speed adrenaline-pumping driving, *and* a bit of strategic depth to keep things interesting after the first few days.

The sequel improves significantly on the earlier game (without really changing it very much) especially in the area of car handling (thanks to input from Ayrton Senna), but with something that started off as fab as *Super Monaco GP*, that's still just window-dressing. Essential stuff.

MEGA says: The competition isn't really up to much as far as Formula One racing goes (yet), but even so, you'd have to go a long, long way to come up with a better driving game than this one. (And you'll probably have to wait a long, long time for someone to write one, anyway).

FOR SALE: *Super Monaco GP*
£20 – 021 705 2106
£25 – 0753 855888
£25 – 0244 300315

6. ROAD RASH 2 (INC. ROAD RASH)

Publisher: Electronic Arts
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 4 of MEGA

Not entirely different to *Road Rash*, but it improves on the original enough to make it even more enjoyable. The two-player mode split-screen is a god-send and the intense rivalry it produces is unbeatable. The one-player mode is also that bit tougher, and with more bikes and better graphics and sound this really is a great improvement. If you've got the original *Road Rash*, you might even consider buying this because of the two-player game, which is almost worthy of the price of the game itself.

MEGA says: What a game! Speed, violence and bikes – what more could you ask for?

7. LEMMINGS

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 2 of MEGA

180 one-player levels, 20 two-player levels and addictive puzzling gameplay that's going to keep you stumped for an incredibly long time. Excellent use of a password system and a stunningly easy control system make this a must for all gamers.

MEGA says: It's addictive, brain teasing and we can't get Neil away from it. What more of a recommendation do you need?

8. STREETS OF RAGE

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99

If every third Mega Drive game that gets released is a beat-'em-up, how come hardly any of them are any good? Thankfully, that's a question that *Streets Of Rage* doesn't have to answer, because it's great stuff – if it were only tougher to beat!

Lovely backdrops, loads of athletic fighting moves, excellent two-player action (two players can interact with each other to pull off some frightening moves) and an imaginative approach to special weapons (the police car firing rockets from half-a-dozen screens back and still managing to pick off the bad guys with pinpoint accuracy is brilliant!) all go together to make this the most challenging and rewarding game the Mega Drive has to offer in the genre.

MEGA says: If you want a beat-'em-up, there is no alternative (well, except *Golden Axe 2*).

FOR SALE: *Streets Of Rage*
£28 ono – 0244 534219
£20 – 021 705 2106
£20/swap – 0742 484406
£15 – 05512 2778
£24/Swap – 0275 393397

9. QUACKSHOT

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99

Yes, it's another platformer; yes, it's another Disney licence; yes, it's a bit of a clone of *Mickey Mouse's Castle Of Illusion*; but none of that matters one little bit. Why not? Because *Quackshot* is excellent fun. This is the game that *Fantasia should* have been. It looks lush, it sounds lovely, and it's action-quacked (sorry about that) from start to finish.

MEGA says: Are you deaf? We said get it!

FOR SALE: *Quackshot*
£20/swap – 091 5655981
£28 – 0244 534219
£25 – 0244 300315
£20 – 051 928 1820
£20 – 0753 855888

10. SONIC THE HEDGEHOG

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99

It's quite possible that this is the most famous video game ever – it's certainly the one which, more than any other, lifted console games out of the spotty schoolboy ghetto and into the real-world limelight where they truly belong.

Yeah, it's a bit easy to finish, but why be selfish? Isn't it nice that everyone gets a chance to see the end sequence for once? Anyway, there's so much hidden away in *Sonic The Hedgehog* and it's just so much damn fun to play that you'll never get bored with it, no matter how many times you whip nasty ol' Dr Robotnik's ass. And, if you don't still get a buzz when Sonic loops the loop at maximum speed with his super-fast boots on, get someone to check your pulse – you may be dead.

MEGA says: Still the most technically stunning game the Mega Drive's ever seen, and the standard-bearer of a whole new era of video games. Completely amazing, completely brilliant.

TO SWAP: *Sonic*
021 705 2106
FOR SALE: *Sonic*
£12 – 05512 2778
£15 – 0753 855888
£16 – 0622 843129
£24/Swap – 081 855 8769

11. RAINBOW ISLANDS

Publisher: Taito (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)

Already hailed as the best 16-bit computer game of all time, *Rainbow Islands* has come to the Mega Drive and, miraculously, has got even better. The impossibly addictive platform action is the same as ever, the amazingly cute graphics are as sweet as ever, and the devilish, fiendishly hidden bonuses are as devilish and fiendishly hidden as ever. And with Mega Drive's *Rainbow Islands* you get a whole extra game on top! Well, it's more of a variation than a completely different game, true, but the extra, harder version extends the life of a game which was already practically immortal, and makes it just about the best value-for-money investment you'll ever see in an arcade platformer.

MEGA says: If you've got a UK Mega Drive, this game alone makes it worth buying a Jap adaptor. Seriously beautiful, incomparably playable and unbeatably addictive.

WANTED: *Rainbow Islands*
0472 276026

12. PGA TOUR GOLF

Publisher: EA
Price: £39.99

There isn't a lot of competition in the golf field when it comes to Mega Drive games, but what there is, *PGA Tour* is miles ahead of. The graphics are exquisite, the control is practically perfect, loads of people can play at once, it's got every option you could possibly want, and there's even a battery back-up. Nothing else so far captures that elusive "wandering around a beautiful landscape pausing occasionally to batter a harmless little ball around with a series of big sticks" atmosphere as well as *PGA* does. *World Class Leaderboard* comes close, but if golf is your bag (ho, ho), then this is your game.

MEGA says: This is the best golf game there is, and also one of the best Mega Drive game for more than two players. Why not club together (sorry) with your mates and buy it?

13. SWORD OF VERMILLION

Publisher: Sega
Price: £49.99

Try not to be put off by the fearsome price tag on this one, because if you're into all that RPG hacking 'n' slashing malarkey, this'll be money well spent.

Sword Of Vermillion is probably the best game of the type on the Mega Drive and, in a market that's becoming more crowded by the day, that's no mean feat.This game is big, slick and sexy.

MEGA says: Look, you're as well to spend £50 on something excellent as waste £35 on something average, aren't you? Quality costs (and in this case it certainly does), but it's usually worth it.

14. PHANTASY STAR 3

Publisher: Sega
Price: £49.99

A completely huge RPG, with loads of different worlds and a whole gang of characters to control. Try to complete *this* one in a night without using the battery back-up...

MEGA says: It's a lot of money, but in terms of hours of fun per pound, you'll be hard pushed to beat this one.

15. AERO BLASTERS

Publisher: Kemco (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)

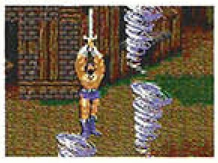
If you're one of the not-very-many people who've played this brilliant game in the arcades (under the name of *Air Busters* more likely than not), you won't need telling what a fantastic, all-action, exciting and varied blastathon it is. If you aren't one of *those people*, then be told right now – *Aero Blasters* is the fastest, meanest, sexiest, joypad-grippingliest, sweatiest shoot-'em-up there's ever been.

It is more impressive-looking than most Mega Drive zappers, more innovatively designed, better off in the end-of-level boss department, and it has frighteningly fast and dangerous tunnel sections, which provide the biggest wide-eyed thrills you'll ever get from your console.

MEGA says: One of the best Mega Drive shoot-'em-ups ever without the tiniest shadow of a doubt. Your game collection shouldn't be without it.

16. GOLDEN AXE 2 (INC. GOLDEN AXE)

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99



What's that? You want some beat-'em-ups? OK, here's a real golden oldie. If you're one of those strange people who likes nothing better than to wander in straight lines through strange lands kicking lumps out of the previously-happy inhabitants, then you'll probably like *Golden Axe*.

The sequel did nothing to alter the linear gameplay (Ax, Gillius or Tyris still start heading right and just keep going) and the two games are to all intents and purposes identical. It's still a simple walk-along-and-hit-fire-a-lot-whenever-you-meet-anyone kind of affair, but the execution is lovely with impressively muscular sprites and some great attacking moves. The five big levels will keep you entertained for quite a while and, while it's all very repetitive, the scenery is pretty enough to make you want to keep at it until you see the end.

MEGA says: The best game in a very limited genre, but why are beat-'em-ups always so easy to complete? Who knows?

17. DESERT STRIKE

Publisher: EA
Price: £34.99

Yes, OK, so it's in extremely poor taste, but you can't deny that *Desert Strike* is one of the most excellent pieces of blasting fun that the Mega Drive's ever played host to. Sometimes it can feel like you're fighting the entire war yourself, what with missions to complete, hundreds of enemies to blast and all manner of stuff to rescue with your helicopter's all-purpose winch. But even if you're not the xenophobic type, you'll be hard pushed not to have a great time with this atmospheric and action-packed shoot-'em-up.

MEGA says: Never mind the plotline, go out and get yourself enlisted today. *Desert Strike* is a great game, and that's what matters.

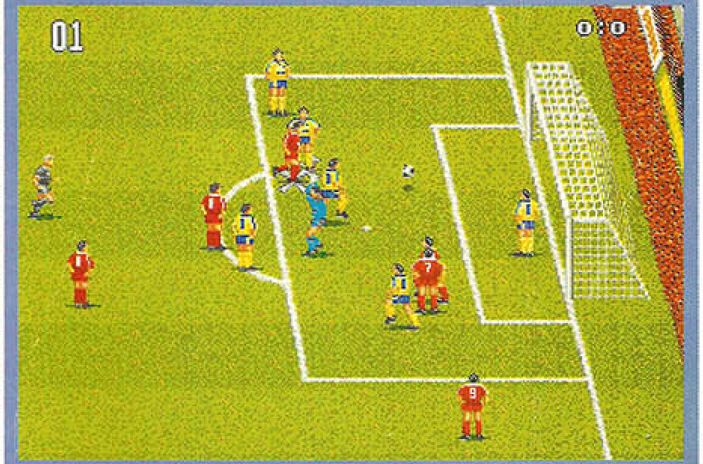
18. THUNDERFORCE 4

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 1 of MEGA

EURO CLUB SOCCER

NUMBER 95

Fancy taking your favourite team through Europe and on to become World Champions? Yes? Then you'd better check out *Euro Club Soccer*



Does anybody know what's going on here? The goalie obviously doesn't, nor the defence. I should wait for *Kick Off* if I were you (see page 24)

Football! It's a funny old game (as was once said by an old footballer desperate to become a household name) and it gets even funnier when you try and convert it onto a console.

Football games usually come in two categories. They're either: a) sad mockeries of a game that shouldn't grace anyone's collection (*World Cup Italia '90* is a prime example) or b) incredibly slick and playable games that everyone should own. At least that's the theory.

But as with all rules, there's always an exception. And this exception comes in the shape of *Euro Club Soccer*.

SEGA
VIRGIN GAMES
0:0
EUROPEAN CUP
LIVERPOOL
VERSUS
CARL ZEISS JENA
SECOND HALF

The choice of teams is great, and if you don't like any of the English teams, you've got the other Euro clubs to choose from

There are good things about *Euro Club Soccer* that make it an essential purchase for footy fans. You can choose from over 170 teams from all over Europe, including the best teams from England and Scotland, and just play a simple one-off match. Alternatively, you can go for all the glory and enter the European Cup.

The European Cup is an eight-round competition that sees you playing a two-legged match (home and away) which you must win to progress through to the next round. Get to the final, win it, and your team will be crowned as the Euro Champs. Then play a final one off match in order to become World Champs. A nice addition to the game is the multi-player option. You can play one on one with a mate, but you can also take on up to eight players in the European Cup. Each player picks a team and plays through the rounds. You play against a human or computer opponent until there's only one left (that's if you don't lose along the way). This is great stuff and it's guaranteed to cause a few arguments.

Add to this great sound, nice animation and generally good all-round graphics, and you've got a very nice game indeed. But, and there's always a but, everything's not as nice as all that.

The gameplay suffers slightly from being limited to just kicks and passes. You can alter the length of kicks and passes by holding down the button for a certain time, but in practice it becomes too fiddly. You can also head and volley the ball, but these moves are really not that controllable.

Euro Club Soccer is a game that will appeal to some people and not to others. It's not hard to win the World Championship, but the multi-player option is great. This is definitely a game that you'll pull out every month or so for a quick game. Not great, but not bad either.

PUBLISHER: Virgin Games

PRICE: £39.99

RELEASE: August '92

CARTRIDGE: 8 Mbit

CONTACT: Virgin 081 960 2255

MEGA SAYS: A decent footy sim that suffers from a few gameplaying wobbles. It's the best footy game around though, and the multi-player game is very good fun. 71%

Turn over

TOP 100

The sequel to the sequel of the conversion of the coin-op looks prettier than ever before, but gameplay wise it offers nothing more than *Thunderforce 3*. If anything, the groovy graphics (and they really are rather groovy, er, "dadio") get in the way of the action – there's too much going on on-screen at any one time.
MEGA says: Looks great, lots to blast through, looks great, solid shoot-'em-up action, looks great and er, nothing *really* that could be described as special. It really does look great though.

FOR SALE: *Thunderforce 4*
£21 – 061 330 1862

19. WORLD OF ILLUSION

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 3 of MEGA

This game is way too easy in one-player mode, but for its brilliant two-player game it earns this position. It's hard, interactive fun. Gorgeous graphics and amazing animation add to the game, and it makes *Castle of Illusion* look old hat.
MEGA says: Don't think about buying this unless you've got a mate to play it with.

20. REVENGE OF SHINOBI

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99

Revenge Of Shinobi, the excellent follow-up to the popular arcade beat-'em-up, looks great and sounds excellent, and although you've seen the format a hundred times before, this one's so well done that you can forgive it any lack of originality.
MEGA says: Super stuff, with top special effects and just plain special gameplay (if you can be "plain special", that is).

TO SWAP: *Revenge of Shinobi* (Jap) – 0768 899773

21. TAZ-MANIA

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99

The most cartoon-like Sega game so far, *Taz-Mania* stars that lovable psychopath, the Tazmanian Devil, in a *Sonic*-like game of epic (in everything but game size) proportions. It's beautiful, it's hilarious, but it's also a bit repetitive and none too tough to get to the end of. If you've got a Looney Tunes-loving younger brother or sister, though (or if you *are* a Looney Tunes-loving younger brother or sister), this is absolutely ideal.
MEGA says: Brilliantly entertaining, but not all that demanding, *Taz-Mania* is perfect for the kids, and for those of you who can afford to spend lots of dosh on games which you'll finish in three days.

TO SWAP: *Taz-Mania*
0580 752429
FOR SALE: *Taz-Mania*
£23 – 0272 602539
£25 – 0244 300315
£20/swap – 081 854 0910
£25/swap – 081 855 8769

22. JAMES POND 2 – ROBOCOD

Publisher: EA
Price: £39.99

Converted from, but significantly improved upon, the 16-bit computer classic, *Robocod* was the game that took on Sonic at his own game and didn't make a half-bad stab at it. Exceptionally pretty, this is one of the best hedgehog clones you can buy.
MEGA says: Great little game, with a different feel to most platformers (largely thanks to your extendible character...). A good laugh.

FOR SALE: *James Pond 2*
£20 – 0600 714582
£20 – 0272 602539

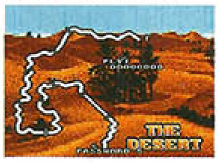
23. SIDE POCKET

Publisher: Data East (IMPORT)
Price: £35 (see importer)
Reviewed in Issue 2 of MEGA

A novel coin-op conversion with bells on. You can try to beat the one-player game, play a mate, or show off your skills in the trick game. Smart graphics, great sound and fun gameplay go to make a strange, but welcome, breath of fresh air.
MEGA says: We all luv a game of pool, and this beats paying 30p a go down the pub, every time. (Well, not quite – Neil)

24. LOTUS TURBO CHALLENGE

Publisher: Electronic Arts
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 3 of MEGA



Driving Lotus Elan's or Esprit's across various terrains might not sound like fun, but with great graphics, fab sound and a two-player head-to-head game, this one is definitely worth buying.
MEGA says: It beats games like *Out Run* and *Turbo Out Run* hands down. If racing is your thing, buy this now.

25. TERMINATOR 2

Publisher: Arena
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 4 of MEGA

The first *Operation Wolf*-type game that's appeared on the Mega Drive, *and* it's even better for the fact that it's compatible with the Menacer light gun. Don't worry about that though, because it plays very well with a joypad too.

It's a decent shoot-'em-up, and loads of images from the film make it all the more fun to watch.
MEGA says: A decent shoot-'em-up and a tough one too. It's got great graphics, superb sound and also some really nice gameplay.

26. CASTLE OF ILLUSION

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99

Mickey Mouse, eh? Don't you just love him? No matter what he does, no matter where he goes, his little mousey ears always stay perfectly round. Yep, even when he appears in really lovely platform adventures like this one, with all manner of strange and beautiful Disney-style fantasy creatures trying to off him in a deeply unfriendly manner as he tries to rescue his sweet mouse babe from the excellently-named witch Mizrabel. What a trouper he is.
MEGA says: A lovely platform epic very much in the style of (whisper it) *Mario*, except without all that tedious head-butting palaver. Gorgeous to look at and gorgeous to play. The whole family will love this one.

TO SWAP: *Castle of Illusion*
0942 35928

27. LHX ATTACK CHOPPER

Publisher: EA
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 1 of MEGA

The Mega Drive's first chopper-'em-up and only the second genuine flight sim (albeit in an action-orientated way). The graphics are supremely detailed and suffer from only a slight jerkiness while the action remains fast and, yes indeed, furious.
MEGA says: Anyone who's ever seen *Apocalypse Now* or *Wings Of The Apache* will relish this chance to spray heat-seeking death at anything that moves. And anyone who fancies "having a go" at developing their own military tactics and completing a whole Eastenders (long drawn-out series) of missions will find plenty to get their teeth stuck in to.

28. DECAP ATTACK

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99

Decap Attack (originally released as *Magical Hat Turbo Adventure*) may at first glance make you go "yuck". But if you persist past the first 20 seconds, you'll suddenly discover that you're having a brilliant time, thanks to the rollicking platform escapades that make up this wonderfully tasteless game.

Controlling a character who can chuck his proper head (his name's Chuck D Head, good eh?) and who has an extra, telescopic, head in his ribcage is simply great fun, and the cheesy music complements the gameplay absolutely perfectly.
MEGA says: Ropeyish graphics, but don't let that put you off this gorgeous and funny platformer.

29. GHOULS 'N' GHOSTS

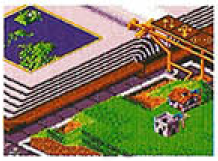
Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99

A frighteningly tough coin-op conversion, but hey, it's not as if you have to shovel money into the thing, so who cares? You certainly won't be seeing the end of this one during the same day you buy it, and that's even with infinite continues. The graphics and sound are practically flawless, as brave Sir Arthur scuttles his swathe through legions of platform-placed zombies, monsters and vultures. *Ghouls 'n' Ghosts* is simply one of the best arcade games around.
MEGA says: *Ghouls 'n' Ghosts* is the business – and, for once, the tough difficulty tuning guarantees decent value for money as well as being great short-term arcade fun.

TO SWAP: *Ghouls 'n' Ghosts*
Swap plus £3 – 0522 510967
FOR SALE: *Ghouls 'n' Ghosts*
£28 – 0742 484406
£23 – 0763 249517

30. POPULOUS

Publisher: EA
Price: £39.99



Immensely strange and original God-simulator game in which you hold sway over the very shape of the land itself, as you try to create an army of followers to defeat an opposing deity. Slightly forbidding at first with a mass of controls to get the hang of, but once you're in, you'll probably never want to come back out.
MEGA says: One of the most compulsive games ever invented. There's nothing else like it on the MD so, egomaniacs everywhere, don't miss it.

31. TOE JAM AND EARL

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99

Multi-player action doesn't get a lot more entertaining than this. Toejam (urgh) and Earl are two of the grooviest aliens you could ask to have a close encounter with, which is part of the reason why it's such a pleasure to help them out on their quest to rebuild their crashed spaceship. The rest of the reason, though, is the superbly manic and zany action which takes place as our two heroes career around the screen, causing havoc wherever they go. After a few plays, the lower levels tend to drag a bit (there's no password option), but this game is both original and insane.
MEGA says: Another OK game, which becomes completely essential when played with someone else. Got any friends? Buy this. Haven't got any friends? Buy this and make some.

FOR SALE: *Toejam & Earl*
£20 – 0600 714582

32. SPEEDBALL 2

Publisher: Virgin Games
Price: £34.99
Reviewed in Issue 1 of MEGA

This game is Mega Drive violence at its most extreme. Nominally a future sports sim, *Speedball 2* is actually football meets rollerball meets bare-knuckle boxing in a frantic and immensely brutal festival of blood and guts. There's also plenty of room for skill and strategy, which means that for an all-round sporting experience *Speedball 2* is hard to beat – especially in two-player mode.
MEGA says: Very much an arcade sports game (rather than the more tactical approach favoured by, say, *John Madden Football*), this is about as good as arcade sports games get. *Speedball 2* is totally vicious and totally excellent.

33. PIT FIGHTER

Publisher: Tengen
Price: £37.99

Ooh look, it's another beat-'em-up. Ah yes, but wait... this one's different. How come? Well, it's got digitised graphics, guv. That means the fighters you take on in this simulation of that ugliest of "sports" (pit fighting, that is) look incredibly realistic, which means you can imagine that it's a real human being you're knocking the living daylights out of. You sad person.
MEGA says: Pretty dull and morally dubious beat-'em-up fare. You won't find much prettier BEUs, but gameplay-wise you could do a lot better than this.

34. SHINING IN THE DARKNESS

Publisher: Sega
Price: £49.99

A mammoth, gorgeous RPG (as opposed to a gorgeous mammoth RPG, which would be a completely different proposition involving attractive elephants, wouldn't it?) with lovely aesthetics and gameplay which will keep you entranced for months. *Shining In The Darkness* is probably the Mega Drive's most accessible RPG, so comes highly recommended to anyone who fancies giving the genre a try.
MEGA says: A bit of a must for RPG fans, but even if you're not into the genre, give this a try. You might find that you're pleasantly surprised.

FOR SALE: *Shining In The Darkness*
£25 – 0763 249517

35. PHANTASY STAR 2

Publisher: Sega
Price: £59.99

Not quite as big and sexy as *Phantasy Star 3*, obviously, but pretty impressive all the same.
MEGA says: Great stuff, but at this price it's strictly for absolute fanatics.

FOR SALE: *Phantasy Star 2*
£25/swap – 0708 448078
£33/swap – 081 855 8769

36. F-22 INTERCEPTOR

Publisher: EA
Price: £39.99

There aren't many flight simulators around on the Mega Drive, which, to be honest, is most of the reason why this is the best one. The graphics are fabulous, but the gameplay gets repetitive a bit too quickly for MEGA's liking.

MEGA says: If you want a flight sim, this is about as good as they currently get. Luckily Microprose has some fantastic up, down, flying around, looping-the-loop-type stuff in the pipeline.

FOR SALE: *F-22 Interceptor*
£20/swap – 081 854 0910

37. STRIDER

Publisher: Sega
Price: £44.99

Amazing graphics, superb sound, lovely animation and some of the biggest and baddest enemies you'll ever meet, are the ingredients of *Strider*. Pretty simplistic platform-leaping beat-'em-up is the order of the day here, but *Strider* does it better than most, and it does it looking better than almost anything. Oh yeah, and the "running down the side of a mountain" sequence is just about worth the cost of the cart all by itself.

MEGA says: You'll finish it in two days, but if you want something which will show your friends the power of the Mega Drive, this is the game (second to only *Sonic the Hedgehog 2*) that'll make them go "gosh, wow" the most.

FOR SALE: *Strider*
£28 – 0742 484406

TO SWAP: *Strider*
Swap or sell £20 – 0275 393397

38. ESWAT

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99

Bearing only the slightest resemblance to the coin-op of the same name, *ESWAT* luckily manages to be an even better game than its arcade counterpart. It's got a bit more to it than the coin-op's limited beat-'em-up formula, and although it's still no *Sword Of Vermillion*, there's just about enough thinking to keep you interested to the end.

MEGA says: There are literally dozens of this type of game around, but this is one of the relatively few which are actually worth having. Pretty simplistic, but still involving and addictive.

TO SWAP: *Eswat*
0768 899773

39. SHADOW DANCER

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99

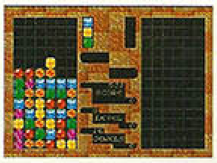
ESWAT with a dog, basically.

MEGA says: More fab scrolling beat-'em-up action, and you'll find yourself getting really attached to your little ninja pooch, too. The baddies are truly bad and the ninja scum that Joe's fighting against put up a decent enough fight. There are plenty of secret bonuses and hidden goodies to keep the interest factor up. Well worth a bang – check it out.

TO SWAP: *Shadow Dancer*
0589 752420

40. COLUMNS

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99



The game they give away with the Game Gear, and it's easy to see why – it's worth buying one of the fabby little machines just to play this, except, of course, you don't have to. This brilliant cross between *Tetris* and *Klax* is better on the Mega Drive than anywhere else, thanks mainly to the fact that the graphics are big enough to let you actually see what's going on. great stuff solo, but the two-player head-to-head "flash" game is totally wonderful. The best Mega Drive puzzle game going.

MEGA says: Buy another joypad, buy *Columns*, and then invite some of your friends round. Then see if you can get them to leave...

41. KID CHAMELEON

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99

Ultra-cute platform thang with lots of really neat touches, but it's too easy and not all that exciting. Sega hyped this game almost as much as they did Sonic *The Hedgehog*, so they must have been more than a bit disappointed with its lack-lustre performance sales-wise. The game isn't at all bad, and remember – you don't have to be great to be good.

MEGA says: A large platform game, but it's no *Sonic*. If large platform games are your thing, then this might be one of the best you ever buy.

FOR SALE: *Kid Chameleon*
£20 – 0272 602539

42. JOE MONTANA 3

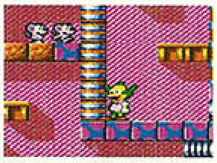
Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 3 of MEGA

The only serious (ha) threat to the *John Madden* crown comes back for a third time. It's got several things *John Madden '93* hasn't, notably a league, three different viewpoints and a zoom in mode. However, it's not as playable or friendly to use. This is one for the serious American football fan.

MEGA says: Sega try again, but they fall just short. It's worth checking out if American football is your thang.

43. KRUSTY'S SUPER FUN HOUSE

Publisher: Flying Edge
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 1 of MEGA

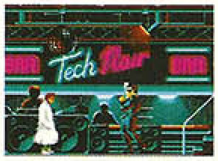


The Simpsons always threatened to invade the world of Mega Drive games, but they arrived about six months too late to cash in on the height of the hype. Luckily for Krusty, his game is good enough to make a good impression in its own right. There's lots of puzzles, lots of cartoony graphics and lots of fun to be had by all.

MEGA says: *Krusty's Super Fun House* is one of a rare breed of game: a licensed title that manages to combine a big name with a decent game. Good rat-splatting stuff.

44. TERMINATOR

Publisher: Virgin
Price: £39.99



You're really enjoying yourself, you're marvelling at the lush graphics, you're being blown away by the non-stop all-action platform shoot-'em-up gameplay, you're blasting through the fourth level and... er, then you finish it. That's it then, eh?

MEGA says: Lovely game, but there's not nearly enough of it.

45. TWO CRUDE DUDES

Publisher: Data East (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)

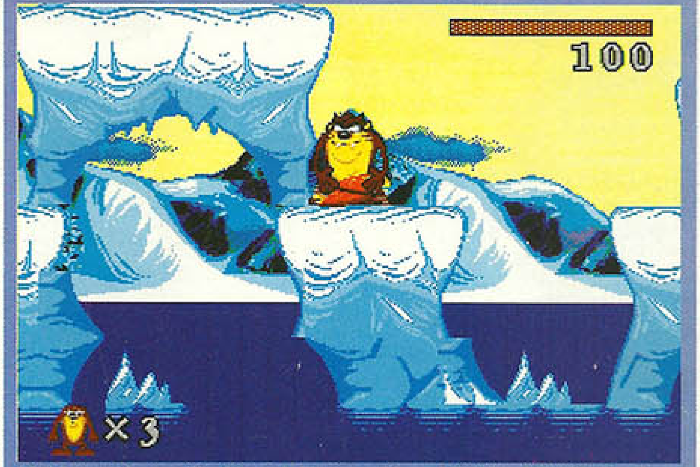
Well, it's a beat-'em-up and it's got some crude dudes in it. Er...

MEGA says: A fairly accurate version of the coin-op *Crude Busters*

TAZ-MANIA

NUMBER 21

If you're a fan of the cartoon series, then you probably already own this game. If you aren't, you may well prefer *Sonic* or *Rainbow Islands*



I told you this guy liked to eat. These cold, wet fish (urgh!) will give Taz back some energy, so he can go and find that lost egg

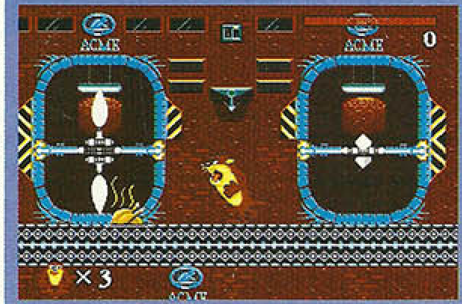
Taz is becoming quite a little cult figure at the moment, what with his cartoon slot on Saturday morning TV. This game, however, was out way before Taz started terrorising nine-year-olds.

Taz was originally seen in old Bugs Bunny cartoons. Sega picked up on the popularity of the character and decided that a cute platform game would be a good idea. And they were right!

The plot behind the game is comic enough. Taz likes to eat, and when we say eat, we mean EAT! And because he has got such a huge appetite, the game includes some very large edible objects, and they don't come much larger than dinosaur bird eggs.

It's a pity that all the dinosaur birds are extinct, isn't it? Or are they? According to legend, there's a valley where the last, and possibly very lonely, bird lives. And without another word Taz is off to find it. That's where our story begins.

One thing that hits you as soon as you start playing *Taz-Mania* is the attention to detail, animation and general high standard of graphics. Add to that a very cartoon like soundtrack and you get all sorts of computer journals saying stupid things like, "Wow, it's like an interactive cartoon".



The route inside the ACME factory is a bit complex and there are loadsa things to avoid. Still, here's a nice chicken to keep you going

Get past all that rubbish (or hype, which means the same thing) though, and you finally arrive at the heart of the game. And this is the real disappointment. There's nothing new in here and even though everything seems to be in there, you do get the impression that you've played this game somewhere before.

The mine cart section is a nice little sub-game and more sections like this would have made the whole game that little bit more enjoyable. The game could also do with being made that little bit harder; play the game a few time, suss the control system, and you shouldn't have too much trouble. Most hardened gamesplayers will simply walk through the game.

Taz-Mania is a worthy addition to any collection, but with better, more original and generally more rewarding platform games on the market (*Sonic*, *Sonic 2* and *Rainbow Islands*), you really could get better for you money. Try those first and then if you're still hungry for more, check this one out.

PUBLISHER: Sega
PRICE: £39.99
RELEASE: August '92
CARTRIDGE: 8 Mbit
CONTACT: Sega 071 727 8070
MEGA SAYS: A nice-looking, groovy platformer, but there are so many other game of this type around. Check out the others before you step over to *Taz-Mania*. Oh, it's easy too. 80%

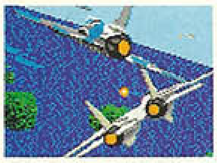
Turn over

and it's OK. The whole game looks good and plays OK but it's just too easy to finish. Same old story...

TO SWAP: *Two Crude Dudes*
0942 321000
Swap/sell £20 – 091 565 5981

46. AFTERBURNER 2

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99



The arcade version of *Afterburner* (all style and no content) threw the player and his lunch all around a hydraulic cockpit while simultaneously flinging huge graphics at the screen so fast that all you could do was wrench the joystick around wildly, keep your finger locked on the trigger and hope desperately for the best.

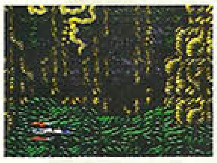
Mega Drive *Afterburner* recreates the feel of the coin-op perfectly, except that you'll have to get someone to come round and jiggle your chair for you while you play. What else is there to say?

MEGA says: Er, this, I suppose. *Afterburner 2* (ie *Afterburner*) is excellent short-term blasting, but it's thinner than gold plating on a window, and there are plenty of other shoot-'em-ups that'll give you bigger thrills. Try *Hellfire* or *Aero Blasters* for starters.

FOR SALE: *Afterburner 2*
£15 – 0909 721888

47. THUNDERFORCE 3

Publisher: Sega
Price: £35.99



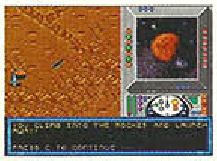
Of course, with the arrival of *Thunderforce 4*, it might seem a bit ludicrous to rush out and buy this now. But if you don't, you'll be missing out on some of the best blasting mayhem this side of, er, anywhere. But not only that. You'll also be missing out on the chance to make your mates go "Woo!" at some of the best visual effects yet seen on the Mega Drive. It's not all cosmetics though – *Thunderforce 3* is also a damn fine shoot-'em-up in its own right with great weapons, loadsa power-ups and loadsa baddies. If you're a zapping fan, this is another one of those "must-haves", basically.

MEGA says: An incredibly slick and gorgeous blaster which is perhaps slightly better to look at than play, but that's probably because it's so bloody wonderful to look at. You shoot-'em-up fanatics will love some more of the same, but those new to the genre had better check out *Hellfire* or *Aero Blasters* first.

FOR SALE: *Thunderforce 3*
(Jap) £20 – 0763 249517

48. BUCK ROGERS "COUNTDOWN TO DOOMSDAY"

Publisher: EA
Price: £49.99

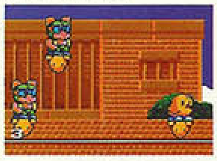


Not one of the most spectacular games you'll ever see, but the game's got tons of depth. Searching around this futuristic strategic RPG thing will keep you interested, but MEGA wants to know why they left out the old Twiki robot?

MEGA says: Very nice, but wouldn't it have been better to use the licence for a good old-fashioned shoot-'em-up? MEGA thinks so.

49. NEW ZEALAND STORY

Publisher: Taito (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)



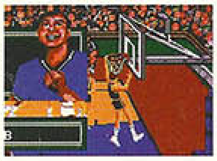
Another classic coin-op that's seen incarnations on just about every format imaginable, but the Mega Drive version takes an unexpected twist by being less of a conversion than a rearrangement of the original. All the same features found in the arcade game are present and correct, but the level layouts and structures are almost completely different. While this is a bit of a bummer for arcade perfectionists, it means that *New Zealand Story* fans now have a whole new game to play, and that can't be a bad thing.

MEGA says: *New Zealand Story* on the Mega Drive is as cute, clever and addictive as it ever was, so who cares if all the bits are in different places? Not us, that's for sure.

TO SWAP: *New Zealand Story*
(Jap) – 0768 899773

50. TEAM USA BASKETBALL

Publisher: EASN
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 1 of MEGA



This is the best Mega Drive basketball game so far. Excellent two-player action and wacky signature moves make this the essential purchase for all basketball fans.

MEGA says: Shame its: a) just a tad too easy; and b) not quite up to the usual EASN standard. But apart from these two quibbles, it's lovely.

FOR SALE: *Team USA Basketball*
£23 – 0272 602539

51. TRUXTON

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99

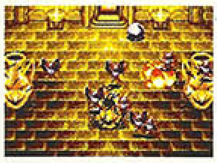
Shoot-'em-up, huh? Vertical scrolling, huh? Bit easy to beat, isn't it?

MEGA says: Well yes, but on the whole, *Truxton* is a decent enough effort. It's good fun to pick up and play every now and again, but it'll never change your life, or even give you one especially wonderful evening. Mmm, sorry.

FOR SALE: *Truxton*
£20/Swap – 0275 393397

52. DRAGON'S FURY

Publisher: Tengen
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 1 of MEGA

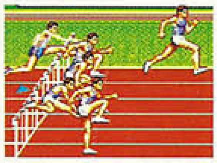


It's a pinball game.

MEGA says: And it's lovely.

53. OLYMPIC GOLD

Publisher: US Gold
Price: £39.99

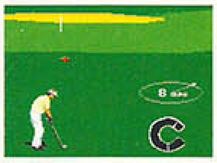


The graphics may be lush, but at the root of it all, it's just a creative way to pummel the living daylights out of your joypad.

MEGA says: Pretty dull by yourself, but excellent fun when you've got a few mates round.

54. WORLD CLASS LEADERBOARD

Publisher: US Gold
Price: £37.99



Well, it's pretty good, but it's not really *PGA Tour*, now is it?

MEGA says: No it isn't. Unless you're absolutely golf loopy nuts and just *have* to have every available sim, get *PGA* and settle for that.

55. BATTLE SQUADRON

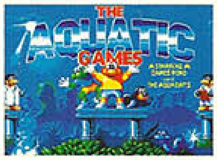
Publisher: EA
Price: £39.99

It's Amiga conversion time again, but this vertically-scrolling blaster looked pretty dated even when it originally appeared about two years ago, and it hasn't really improved with age. Good solid zapping action, but nothing to that's gonna hold your attention for very long.

MEGA says: Bog-standard vertical zaperama with little or nothing to make it stand out from the crowd.

56. AQUATIC GAMES

Publisher: Electronic Arts
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 1 of MEGA

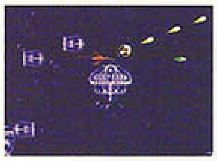


James Pond is back. This time, however, he's taking part (with his friends) in the Aquatic Games. Work out the best tactic for each event and get those gold medals. Lovely graphics and some taxing events make this a fun game, especially for those younger Mega Drive owners.

MEGA says: It's button bashing alright, but not as we know it.

57. BIO-HAZARD BATTLE

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 3 of MEGA

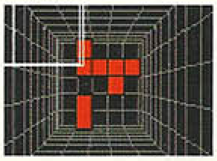


Sexy graphics and spooky sound don't make a game, but they do go a long way. Thankfully *Bio-Hazard Battle* has some exciting shooting action to go with it. It's not the most original idea going, but it has a two-player option. We like it.

MEGA says: There's nothing new in here, but it's very playable.

58. BLOCKOUT

Publisher: EA
Price: £34.99



Your brain will never forgive you. Imagine *Tetris*, played looking down a well, with three-dimensional vector-graphic wire-frame blocks which can be moved, turned and rotated in each of the three axes. Having problems imagining it? Just you try playing it, mate.

MEGA says: Complete mind torture, but if you're a professional mathematician or more laid back than a particularly relaxed sloth, you'll get some serious puzzling fun out of this one.

59. F1 CIRCUS

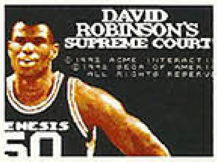
Publisher: Nichibutsu (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)

This game is second only to the *Super Monaco GP* twins, *F1 Circus* looks ropey but plays well. The Formula One tie-in is well implemented and playing the game makes a fairly realistic representation of putting you in the cockpit of the real thing. In other words, you'll crash a lot.

MEGA says: If realism gets your motor running (even if it's at the expense of lush graphics), then check this out.

60. DAVID ROBINSON BASKETBALL

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99



The best of a whole clutch of basketball games recently released by various people. Though still not up to *Team USA Basketball* this one boasts by far the smoothest, fastest action, and some of the nicest effects too. If basketball's your bag (ahem), this is your kind of shopping trolley. (What? – Ed.)

MEGA says: Bouncy bouncy, bouncy bouncy, fun, fun, fun, fun, fun. (What? – Ed.) Tiggers. And basketballs. (Ah – Ed.)

TO SWAP: *David Robinson Basketball*
0582 468674

61. SUPER HANG-ON

Publisher: Sega
Price: £19.99

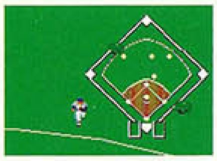
Road Rash, without all the violence. Yes, we know it sounds like a bit of a bad idea, but if what you're after is pure high-speed racing thrills, then this is still your best bet. A near-perfect rendition of the coin-op, too – just try to stop yourself from leaning into those bends...

MEGA says: It looks lovely, it plays beautifully, it'll last for ever. Along with *Super Monaco* and *Road Rash*, the only genuinely essential racing game for your Mega Drive.

TO SWAP: *Super Hang On*
021 705 2106
0522 510967
(Jap) – 0768 899773

62. SPORTS TALK BASEBALL

Publisher: Sega USA (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)
Reviewed in Issue 1 of MEGA

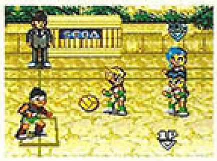


A decent baseball game, that tells you what's going on as it happens.

MEGA says: As with *Joe Montana Football 2*, great for people with no friends.

63. DODGEBALL

Publisher: Sega Japan (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)
Reviewed in Issue 1 of MEGA



Volleyball meets *Speedball* in this strange, but entertaining Japanese game. The idea is to knock your opponent's team members out of the court with a high-speed chuck of a medicine ball. Decidedly strange, inevitably violent and great fun – almost like sellotaping a vulture to your friend's anorak.

MEGA says: Not sure about this vulture/anorak business, but *Dodgeball* remains a good two-(or more) player game.

64. ARCUS ODYSSEY

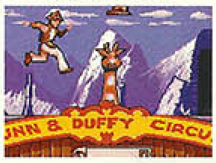
Publisher: Renovation (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)

A lovely looking 3D game, which scores points for offering some of the best simultaneous two-player action that's going.

MEGA says: This is OK by us.

65. INDIANA JONES AND THE LAST CRUSADE

Publisher: US Gold
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 4 of MEGA

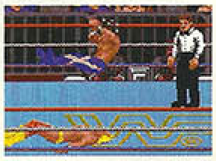


One of the greatest adventurers of all time (and he's fictional too) appears on the Mega Drive. The graphics are nice and the film tie-in is handled very effectively. However, owing to some little gameplay glitches the game ends up being very tough and furthermore very frustrating.

MEGA says: Take a careful look at this before you buy – it's not everybody's cup of tea.

66. WWF SUPER WRESTLE MANIA

Publisher: Flying Edge (IMPORT)
Price: £35
Reviewed in Issue 4 of MEGA

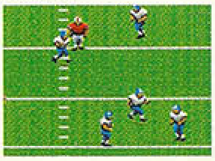


Big, beefy, and as tough as nails. If you fancy getting your hands on a few American wrestlers and giving them the suplex treatment, then this might be the game for you. It's not the most original game in the world and it won't last you that long either.

MEGA says: The two-player head-to-head is quite good fun, but the one-player game lacks excitement.

67. JOE MONTANA 2

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99



Nope, sorry, even this sequel to the original "not too bad but let's face it, it's not as good as *John Madden*" American football game fails to lace the boots or plump the padding of the boy from Electronic Arts. Nice try but no cigar.
MEGA says: It's not as good as *John Madden Football* but it talks to you. Perfect for gridiron fanatics with no friends.

68. FIGHTING MASTERS

Publisher: Treco (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)
Solid two-player beat-'em-up action is the name of this lovely looking game. If only the beast was a bit more substantial in one-player mode. Never mind.
MEGA says: Two-player pommelling can be a great laugh (especially with 12 intergalactic hard cases to play with), but don't bother with *Fighting Masters* if you're a solo scrapper.

69. CHUCK ROCK

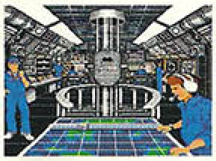
Publisher: Virgin Games
Price: £39.99
This is an old Amiga game which has been brushed up a bit for the Mega Drive and, as you might expect, it's a bit of a lush looker. What you might not expect is a fabby prehistoric platform game which plays like an episode of The Flintstones (except it's funnier) and in which you dispose of your enemies by bouncing them off your gigantic beer belly. Nope, you might not expect that, but it's what you'll get anyway. Ha.
MEGA says: This is a really enjoyable platformer, packed to the brim with variation, lovely little touches and more imagination than a dozen lesser efforts in this somewhat overloaded genre.

70. TETRIS

Publisher: (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)
OK, hands up everyone who doesn't know about *Tetris*. Three of you, eh? Well, where have you been for the last couple of years? On Mars?.
MEGA says: The biggest and sexiest puzzle game of all eternity comes to the Mega Drive. If, by some incredibly unlikely fluke, you don't already have a *Tetris* game, then get this one now. Either that or you'll have to buy a Game Boy.
WANTED: *Tetris*
Any price – 051 334 43160

71. 688 ATTACK SUB

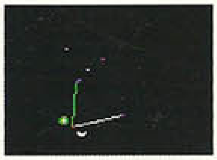
Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99



Nice, atmospheric submarine simulator with a bit of zapping and some pleasant aesthetics.
MEGA says: PING!... Not the kind of thing you ever PING!... imagine anybody buying a Mega PING!... Drive for, but good at what it does.

72. STAR CONTROL

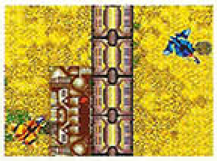
Publisher: Ballistic
Price: £39.99



Massive but not actually all that complicated space strategy trading thing with zappy and tactical bits thrown in as a life-preserver.
MEGA says: A bit of a lark with a chum if you're after something different, but kinda dull if you're on your own.
TO SWAP: *Star Control*
021 705 2106
FOR SALE: *Star Control*
£20 – 0763 249517

73. HERZOG ZWEI

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99



Eight-way scrolling, view-from-above, simultaneous two-player, head-to-head, split-screen shoot- and think-'em-up with bags of strategy. It could have been a classic, but didn't quite manage to hang together.
MEGA says: Almost excellent for two-player head-to-head. If you can pick it up cheap, you may love it.

74. SPIDERMAN

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99

"Spiderman, Spiderman, does whatever a spider can." So how come you never see him getting trapped in a bath then, eh?
MEGA says: Pretty run-of-the-mill platform game, lifted out of the ordinary by some pretty spiffy graphics and a nice line in enemies. This is, however, still really only for web-slinging fanatics and the Manic Street Preachers (evidently they're big fans).
TO SWAP: *Spiderman*
Swap plus £3 – 0522 510967
FOR SALE: *Spiderman*
£25 – 0244 534219
£15 – 0276 22472

75. CORPORATION

Publisher: Virgin Games
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 3 of MEGA
Gigantic and tough 3D, RPG-ish Amiga conversion with some top 3D blasting bits in it. The idea is that you're a secret agent briefed with the unenviable job of trying to establish whether rumours of a company creating killer genetic mutants is true or not. It's involving and absorbing although it can get a bit repetitive if constantly creeping around mutant-infested buildings inches from death, isn't your idea of a good night out.
MEGA says: For role playing fun with a bit more blasting *and* a bit more brain-stretching than usual, *Corporation* is a pretty damn good purchase.

76. TEST DRIVE 2

Publisher: Ballistic
Price: £34.99
A two-player, head-to-head driving game that sounds as if it should be great, but somehow never lives up to expectations.
MEGA says: Enjoyable serious-ish, two-player driving/crashing game, which you may never be able to buy. Life's a bitch, eh?

77. RAMPART

Publisher: Tengen (IMPORT)
Price: £35
Reviewed in Issue 4 of MEGA

The two-player mode in most games is a very welcome additional option. In *Rampart*, it is the only part of the game worth mentioning. Playing this puzzle arcade game against the computer is bland and repetitive. Take on a thinking human opponent, however, and the blood really begins to boil.
MEGA says: If you're a popular sort of bloke, then give this a try with some of your friends.

78. TROUBLE SHOOTER

Publisher: Vic Tokai (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)
Madison and Crystal take to the skies to kick some alien butt in an entertaining shoot-'em-up with a choice of five special weapons, some seriously whacked-out bosses and five levels of constant action.
MEGA says: A tad too small and a tad too easy, but while it lasts, *Trouble Shooter* is right good stuff.

79. ARNOLD PALMER TOURNAMENT GOLF

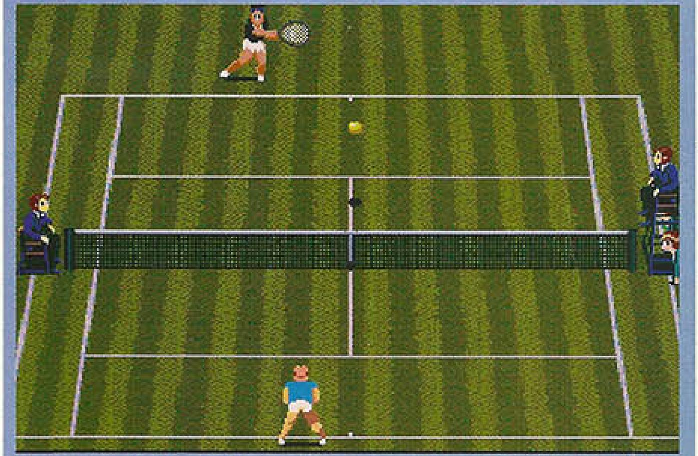
Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99

More golf? Haven't we covered that one already? Of "course" we have! (Another joke like that and you're fired. I'm not joking – Ed.)
MEGA says: *PGA Tour's* the game you want.

GRAND SLAM TENNIS

NUMBER 99

Oh dear! Here it comes. Oh no! Sorry, I can't stop myself... here I go... yes, yes, yes... Anyone for tennis? (Groan – Neil)



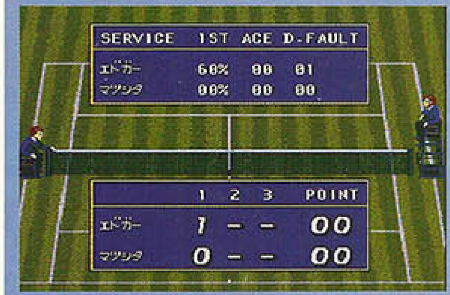
That's a good little shot by the player at the top, and if you don't get into position, you're going to miss it

Sports sims are definitely what you would call a popular genre. Ever since computers hit the home front, software houses have been making them. So, sooner or later they were bound to come up with a tennis sim. There have been some seriously sad attempts, and even those which have been backed by big names have been known to fall short in the playability stakes. Think about it, tennis isn't a game that converts very easily, what with all the tactics, moves and shot power, so making a good simulation was bound to be a difficult thing.

The only game that's really ever come close to getting it right is a SNES game called *Super Tennis*. Now the reason I mention this is because *Grand Slam Tennis* bears more than a passing resemblance to that particular SNES game.

You view the game from a TV point of view (you know, the viewpoint that allows you to catch a glimpse of some frilly knickers when one of the female players bends over), and although you start by playing at the bottom of the court, you also get to play at the top of the screen, because, just like the real thing, these players change ends after two matches.

Control of the game is very simple: button A is used for a weak shot, button B for those more powerful net-busters, and button C to fool a net-hungry opponent with a lob to the baseline. Add to that the fact that you can delicately control the spin and direction of the ball by using the D-pad and you've got a very controllable game that's not overly complicated.



SERVICE	1ST	ACE	D-FAULT
エドガー	60%	00	01
マツシタ	00%	00	00

	1	2	3	POINT
エドガー	1	–	–	00
マツシタ	0	–	–	00

You're one game up, but then you've only played one game. Still, now is your chance to break the computer's serve and go two ahead

Trouble is, the computer opponents are too easy to beat, and the game makes is virtually impossible to make a bad shot unless you're incredibly stupid or try playing over to the left when you're already on the left-hand side. Also, you only have to win four major Grand Slam tournaments to become world champion, so it's not going to last you that long either. The two-player mode will of course add some lifespan to the cart, but because the gameplay isn't all that varied, you won't be playing this as long as, say, *John Madden Football*. Unless you've been dying to play tennis on your console, I can't really recommend this very highly. One little footnote: this game is also called *Jennifer Capriati's Tennis* in America, so don't buy that thinking it's a completely different game, 'cos it isn't.

PUBLISHER: Sega of Japan

PRICE: £35

RELEASE: September '92

CARTRIDGE: 4 Mbit

CONTACT: Telegames 0533 516861

MEGA SAYS: Tennis sims aren't usually very good, and this is no exception. Good for short-term fun, but there's no serious game life for this one.

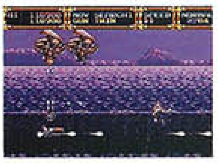
66%

Turn over

TOP 100

80. GLEY LANCER

Publisher: NCS (IMPORT)
Price: £35 (see importer)
Reviewed in Issue 2 in MEGA



Another shoot-'em-up to add to the collection, but at least this one has got something different. The different firing patterns of your sister pods (that follow you around) add a good deal of difficulty to the proceedings
MEGA says: The weapon systems are fun and they make this shoot-'em-up stand out from the rest.

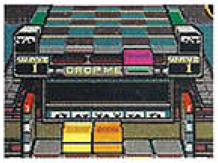
81. GAMES – THE WINTER CHALLENGE

Publisher: Ballistic
Price: £39.99
Pretty run-of-the-mill snowbound sports sim with eight ice-tastic events. As ever, lots of laughs with your buddies, but a real snoozeathon if you try it solo.
MEGA says: This one's been kind of overtaken by *Olympic Gold* as the Mega Drive's première multi-event sports game, but it's still a good example of the genre. It's just not a particularly outstanding genre, is all.

One claim to fame that *Games* can cling to as its own, however, is that it is Ballistic's best ever game.

82. KLAX

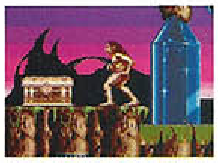
Publisher: Tengen
Price: £34.99



A massive coin-op cult (ie hardly anyone played it but everyone who did, loved it to bits), *Klax* is one of the best puzzle games ever. Unlike *Tetris* et al, you get a bit of scope for your own strategies instead of just needing lightning reactions, although you'll have to have those too. Very original and excellently designed, with a groovy two-player head-to-head game to boot, *Klax* will test your speed, sight, and spatial perception, all at the same time. Can you handle it?
MEGA says: *Columns, Tetris, Blockout* and *Klax* – the only puzzle games you'll ever need. Geniuses shouldn't be without any of them.

83. SHADOW OF THE BEAST 2

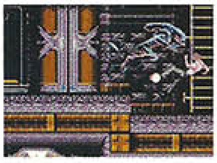
Publisher: Electronic Arts
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 4 of MEGA



The original *Shadow of the Beast* was very poor indeed, but thankfully the sequel is much better. Guide our hero around the lovely countryside battling against all sorts of creatures. You'll need to use your brain as well though, because there are some devilish puzzles that need to be solved.
MEGA says: It runs at a very slow pace and, therefore, may not be to everyone's liking. It is, however, certainly an improvement on the original.

84. ALIEN 3

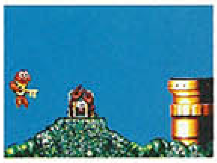
Publisher: Flying Edge
Price: £34.99



Strangely reminiscent of *Terminator*, but then when you realise that both games come from the programmers at Probe, maybe it's not such a big surprise after all. This time you're Ripley and you're faced with the task of machine-gunning, grenade-chucking and alien-blasting your way through platform after platform of action.
MEGA says: Nothing special, and certainly nothing to get excited about. Without the atmospheric effects and intro of *Terminator* the game falls into the ranks of all the other seen-it-all-before platformers.

85. JAMES POND

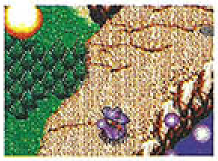
Publisher: EA
Price: £34.99



The prequel to *Robocod*, but a more inferior game. Some cute platform/swimming around fun, but nothing that'll really set your head on fire. Er, not that you'd especially want it to.
MEGA says: The 12 levels won't last you too long, and you'll probably get a bit bored before the end, anyway. This is, however, still good fun for a few days.

86. TWINKLE TALE

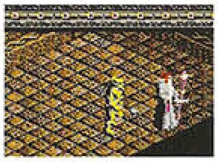
Publisher: WAS (IMPORT)
Price: £35 (see importer)
Reviewed in Issue 1 of MEGA



A fun, original and addictive shoot-'em-up, that suffers from begin too easy. The seven levels are varied and the end-of-level bosses look great, but you'll finish it within two days.
MEGA says: It's great fun, and it's a cute shoot-'em-up. It's just a damn shame the thing is so easy to complete.

87. THE IMMORTAL

Publisher: EA
Price: £39.99



A massive but ropey-looking RPG and with loads of blood 'n' guts definitely one for the gore-thirsty gameplayer. It's very slick but very repetitive and it's all over very quickly. Ah well!
MEGA says: It's an OK game, and some will flip over the graphics, but think very carefully before you blow £40 on this game.

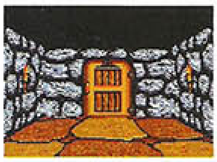
FOR SALE: *The Immortal*
£20 – 0272 602539
£25 – 0698 886223

88. DARIUS 2

Publisher: Taito (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)
You wanna see something different? Then how about seeing seven different endings? Now that is a way of extending a game's lifespan. This classy, sideways-scrolling shoot-'em-up offers enough to earn it a place in the Top 100, but it doesn't quite break any new ground to position it higher than this.
MEGA says: Nice graphics, nice sound, nice challenge – but nothing new whatsoever. An above-average sideways-scroller that's worth a look.

89. MIGHT AND MAGIC

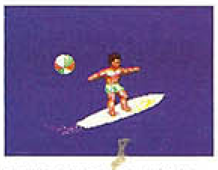
Publisher: Sega
Price: £49.99



A drastically over-expensive game with a dated control interface and crap graphics. But this is still a deep and absorbing role playing game. You can, however, do much better for your money.Check out the *Phantasy Star* series to see exactly what I mean.
MEGA says: This one's past its prime, to be honest.

90. CALIFORNIA GAMES

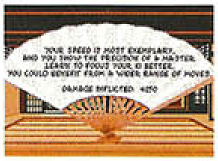
Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99



Half-pipe skateboarding, foot-bag, roller-skating, surfing and BMXing: those Californians sure know how to have a great time, don't they? This multi-event game is a lot of fun to get into, but there's no real long-term appeal.
MEGA says: Put the £40 in a bank account for about fifty years at 12% interest, then go to the USA yourself.

91. BUDOKAN

Publisher: EA
Price: £39.99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DAMAGE INFLICTED: 4250

Martial arts-type beat-'em-up, which requires a little more thought than most. At the end of the day, it's a lot of wiggling the joypad, hitting the buttons and hoping for the best, though.
MEGA says: If beating computer people up (in four different "sporting" events), is where you get your thrills, this is one of the less brain-rotting ways in which you can go about it.

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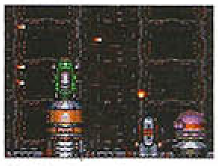
Sell £22 – 0744 34736

92. ZERO WING

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99



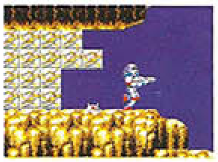
Of all the millions of horizontally-scrolling shoot-'em-ups for the Mega Drive, *Zero Wing* is probably, er, the easiest. You'll finish this within three attempts, which is a bit of a shame as it's otherwise about as good as the genre gets. Lots of nice big aliens, smooth and precise control, and decent weaponry make it lots of fun to play, but there's not much point when you've already finished it!
MEGA says: A really lovely, playable shoot-'em-up, but way, way too easy for all but the most unco-ordinated.

93. THUNDERFORCE 2

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99
Basically, *Thunderforce 3* with some different scrolling bits, but not quite as good.
MEGA says: OK, but why bother with this when there's *Thunderforce 3* (or *Thunderforce 4* for that matter) out there? Or *Aero Blasters* or *Hellfire*, come to that.

94. TURRICAN

Publisher: Ballistic
Price: £39.99



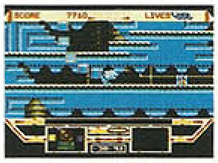
A supremely popular home computer game, but maybe that just shows how easy all those Amiga and ST owners are to please. *Turrican* is an absolutely colossal platform-leaping, shoot-'em-upping, landscape-exploring, epic of a game. But after a while you start thinking, "Oh good, another 100 screens to plough through before I get to the next interesting bit. I wouldn't mind, but they're exactly the same as the last 100 screens".
MEGA says: It's decent enough for a while, but if you've got the patience or the high boredom threshold needed to get to the end, you're a better man than any of us.

95. EUROPEAN CLUB SOCCER

Publisher: Virgin Games
Price: £39.99
This football game was previously seen on home computer formats as the extremely popular *Manchester United Europe*. The fact that it is now the best Mega Drive football game around isn't so much down to it being brilliant, but because there are only about two competitors, both of which are rubbish. Still, this is slick, fast and enjoyable, and although it's easy to beat, you'll get months of fun from the two-player mode. Well worth a look for footy fans.
MEGA says: The undisputed Mega Drive soccer king, but that title will probably go out of the window when Mega Drive's *Kick Off* makes an appearance. Wait for that and then make your own judgement.

96. FATAL REWIND

Publisher: EA
Price: £39.99



You may know this re-titled computer-game classic better as *The Killing Game Show*. It's like *Rainbow Islands* in many ways (without the gameplay), but with big butch metallic graphics and a little bit more to think about – like how impressive the interactive action replay feature is. There's no more going back miles when you get killed either – you just watch your last performance, then take over a split second before you made that last silly mistake. Excellently compulsive platforming fun, if you like that sort of thing.
MEGA says: If you fancy something a bit different from the ordinary cutesy-graphics formula stuff that is most Mega Drive platform games (and who doesn't from time to time?), then this game could be the game for you.

97. SUPER AIRWOLF

Publisher: Kyugu (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)
Super Airwolf is known as *Crossfire* in the US and that should be enough to tell you that this game's got absolutely nowt to do with *Airwolf* – it's just an old vertically-scrolling shoot-'em-up with a new name stuck on it for a quick licence to cash-in. Fortunately (for us) though, it is quite a good old vertically-scrolling shoot-'em-up, but it's still nothing you haven't seen a dozen times before.
MEGA says: One of the best efforts in the vertical-blasting genre, but worthwhile only if you don't already have half-a-dozen of the little blighters.

98. EL VIENTO

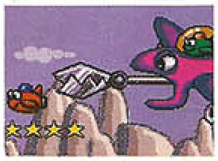
Publisher: Renovation (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)
What do you expect to hear about yet another bog-standard platform beat-'em-up? That the name means "The Double-Decker Bus" in Spanish? That'd be interesting, wouldn't it? If only it were true...
MEGA says: Not true, though. Yet another bog-standard beat-'em-up.

99. GRAND SLAM TENNIS

Publisher: Telenet (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)
Good fun in two-player mode, but severely limited for a solo outing. We could describe this mediocre tennis game as a load of balls, but that would be a tad harsh, so we won't.
MEGA says: Unfortunately, this is the Mega Drive's only tennis game but it really isn't anything special.

100. GADGET TWINS

Publisher: GameTek (IMPORT)
Price: £35 (see importer)
Reviewed in Issue 2 of MEGA



It's cute and it's playable, but it's not exactly an original idea, is it? Good fun bashing fun in the short-term and the two-player option is a good idea.
MEGA says: It's one of those games you either love or hate.

NEXT MONTH...

- Where will *Micro Machines* and *Rolo to the Rescue* appear in next month's Top 100?
- Will you find that bargain cart you've been looking for, through our readers' ads?
- Will your favourite game of all-time be given the past master treatment?

Find out in the March issue of MEGA – on sale Thursday 18 February

TOP 100 POSITIONS

688 Attack Sub	71	Lotus Turbo Challenge	24
Aero Blasters	15	Might and Magic	89
Afterburner 2	46	New Zealand Story	49
Alien 3	84	NHLPA Hockey	3
Aquatic Games	56	Olympic Gold	53
Arcus Odyssey	64	PGA Tour Golf	12
Arnold Palmer Golf	79	Phantasy Star 2	35
Battle Squadron	55	Phantasy Star 3	14
Bio-Hazard Battle	57	Pit Fighter	33
Blockout	58	Populous	30
Buck Rogers	48	Quackshot	9
Budokan	91	Rainbow Islands	11
California Games	90	Rampart	77
Castle of Illusion	26	Revenge of Shinobi	20
Chuck Rock	69	Road Rash 2	6
Columns	40	Shadow Dancer	39
Corporation	75	Shadow of the Beast 2	83
Darius 2	88	Shining in the Darkness	34
David Robinson Basketball	60	Side Pocket	23
Decap Attack	28	Sonic The Hedgehog	10
Desert Strike	17	Sonic The Hedgehog 2	2
Dodgeball	63	Speedball 2	32
Dragon's Fury	52	Spiderman	74
El Viento	98	Sports Talk Baseball	62
ESWAT	38	Star Control	72
European Club Soccer	95	Streets Of Rage	8
F-1 Circus	59	Strider	37
F-22 Interceptor	36	Super Airwolf	97
Fatal Rewind	96	Super Hang-On	61
Fighting Masters	68	Super Monaco GP 2	5
Gadget Twins	100	Sword of Vermillion	13
Games – Winter Challenge	81	Taz-Mania	21
Ghouls 'n' Ghosts	29	Team USA Basketball	50
Gley Lancer	80	Terminator	44
Golden Axe 2	16	Terminator 2	25
Grand Slam Tennis	99	Test Drive 2	76
Hellfire	4	Tetris	70
Herzog Zwei	73	Thunderforce 2	93
Immortal, The	87	Thunderforce 3	47
Indiana Jones	65	Thunderforce 4	18
James Pond	85	Toe Jam & Earl	31
James Pond 2 – Robocod	22	Trouble Shooter	78
Joe Montana 2	67	Truxton	51
Joe Montana 3	42	Turrican	94
John Madden Football '93	1	Twinkle Tale	86
Kid Chameleon	41	Two Crude Dudes	45
Klax	82	World Class Leaderboard	54
Krusty's Super Fun House	43	World of Illusion	19
Lemmings	7	WWF Super Wrestle Mania	66
LHX Attack Chopper	27	Zero Wing	92

They may not have made it into the Top 100, but they could still be worth a look. It's simple, if you want to give one of the games listed below a try, just pick up the phone and dial that number...

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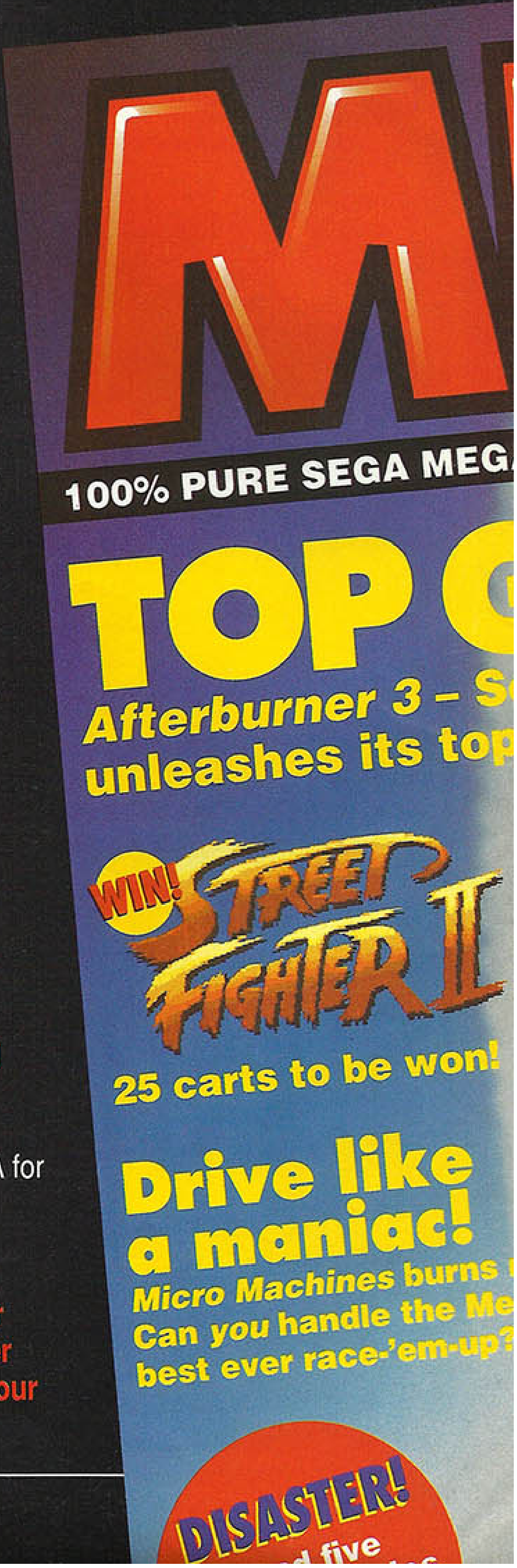
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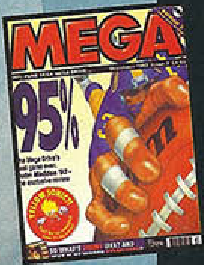

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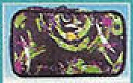

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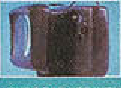

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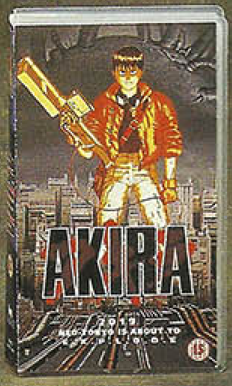

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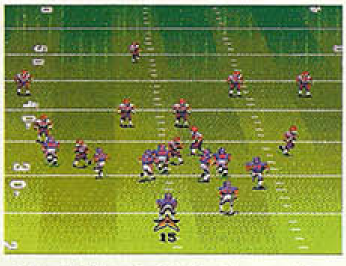
MEGA MOUTH

Yo... (hic). Neil, um, er, West here. I'm horribly dr... (belch), drunk, 'cos I'm celebrating. We're now only seven issues away from being one year old. Where did I put that beer? (Oh for crying out loud – Andy)

TOP 100 RESHUFFLE?

Dear MEGA MOUTH,
Well done on being the most reliable and up-to-date magazine available. I write to ask you a few questions, which I'm sure you'll answer truthfully.

Firstly, I would like to ask you why you gave *John Madden '92* the number one spot in your Top 100? I'm sure you'll have received many letters posing this question, but for my part, I managed to complete the play-offs with no passwords within two days of buying the game and I consider myself to be an average gamesplayer.



John Madden holds the top spot in our Top 100. Disagree? Tough titty

Secondly, I am also concerned about you putting *Road Rash* at number ten. I've had it for over seven months and am still addicted. However, it's not up to me and that's probably exactly what you're going to tell me in your reply.

I would also like to ask you (Neil) why you were rooting for Nintendo at the Future Entertainment Show? I'm not going to go on about how crud they are, but did you *have* to root for them?

PS. I think the standard of Sega Power has dropped since you left. Love your comps.

PPS. I am sorry if I have offended you in any way. If so, it was unintentional. Love your mag.
Basil *(no jokes please)* **Hassan, London**

Dear Basil,
I don't want to give you the "brush" off (boom boom), but we were always bound to get hassle for our Top 100. Madden *is at number one because not only is it a fab game in one player mode (albeit a bit easy), but with a friend it's unbeatable in terms of sheer competitive enjoyment.*

So, onto Road Rash. *Again, it's that controversial old Top 100, isn't it? What can we say? Apart from... HA!*

Next thing is, I wasn't rooting for Nintendo at the show. I was first and foremost promoting the show (which was entirely organised by the company that employs me, Future Publishing) and secondly I was there to promote MEGA. However, while I was there I was called upon to do all sorts of jobs and if that meant talking about Nintendo stuff too, then fine. Frankly, I like some Nintendo games, and so do the rest of the team. It's time to stand up and say "Pooh pooh to all this Sega versus Nintendo crap!" Just because a man drives a Lamborghini, it doesn't mean he thinks a Ferrari is cack. There, said it.

By the way, sorry about that Basil joke at the start of the reply. It was very childish and unnecessary, but unfortunately infantile humour is a friend of ours (snigger). **Neil**

Road Rash sits slightly lower in our Top 100. Tough titty again folks

MEGA STAR

REVIEWERS SLAMMED

Dear Sir/Madam,
Sonic 2 is the greatest game ever!! Maybe it's because I'm female and it's just the pwetty wetty graphics eh? Sega Power, your illustrious sister mag, gave it 89%! Just look at some of the other games they have given the same sort of rating – *Test Drive 2* f'rinstance (nuff said).

Some reviewers seem to be so preoccupied with maintaining what they sadly believe to be their street cred, either that or they have to prove that they haven't been taken in by the "hype". *Sonic 2* or *Sonic* for that matter has never been surpassed for sheer speed, playability and graphical excellence. This is what videogaming should be about. Now, we could argue the toss about whether it's better than *John Madden '92/'93*, but there can be no argument that *Sonic 2* will sell more Mega Drives in one week than *Madden* could in a year. Some reviewers should stop trying so desperately to be personalities and just accept they haven't got Dominik Diamond's job.

If a major release is crap, then by all means say so – *Batman Returns* being a prime example. As you said in that review, games like this only give Mega Drives a bad name – all the more reason for us to shout about a game like *Sonic 2*. Your mag is a welcome addition to a market often amateurishly catered for.
Phyllis Poland, Kirkcudbright

Dear Phyllis,
Sonic 2 *is indeed a fabulous game, but it's caused no end of controversy. We gave it 94% (my personal belief is that* Sonic's *gameplay has everything – the game is a roller-coaster ride of pure playability), but other mags disagreed. Sega Power gave it only 89%, the new Gamesmaster mag gave* Sonic 2 *only 65%. The reasons? Firstly, they felt that* Sonic 2 *was not sufficiently different from the original game (hypocracy here from Sega Power, who recently gave* Road Rash 2 *94% and a hearty recommendation), and secondly, Gamesmaster took this line of argument to extreme seemingly for the sake of controversy. Both these mags are usually rock solid with their reviews, I agree with you Phyllis – too many people were too desperate to be seen as not having been taken in by the spectacular amount of hype.*

The facts: Sonic 2 *is bigger than the original;* Sonic 2 *included a simultaneous two-player option; the original was so damn playable any other changes could have ruined a winning formula; the joy with* Sonic 2 *is racing through the levels, actually hands-on playing the game. So if you like, simply think of* Sonic 2 *as an extra set of levels for the original. No matter, it's still classic stuff and still worth buying if you've got the original (unlike* John Madden '93, *which was too similar to the previous versions to warrant an additional purchase).*

And as for it being too easy, my personal view is that many games can be finished in a day or two if you stick at 'em. The point with Sonic 2 *is that the game engine itself is so gorgeously unrestrictive that there are all sorts of other ways to play the game without just rattling through it.*

The bottom line is this: if Sonic 2 *had arrived on reviewers' desks unannounced from an unheard-of publisher without any of the hype, then they'd have creamed over it. And that's the truth.* Neil

FIGHTING CHANCE

Dear MEGA,
I was wondering where you can actually purchase the super top game *Fighting Masters*. I live in Altrincham, which is just down the road from Manchester, and completely and utterly nowhere seems to sell it. Could you tell me when the game was released and where I might buy it.

PS. Your mag is spectacular and brilliantly hill toppingly funny.

From your humble worshipper,
Sam West (nickname Snoggy), Altrincham

Dear Sam,
Erm, Fighting Masters. *Good ol'* Fighty Wighty Masters. *Mmm, what a goodie. All that fighting and mastery type stuff. (Paul quick, what the bloody hell is* Fighting Masters*?)...*

... Ah yes, it's that monstery beat-'em-up, isn't it? It's an import that's been out for quite a while now so no wonder you're having trouble. Try ringing one of the mail

MEGA MORONS

Dear Harold S Bloxham,
I agree with all your views about the "craze of video games". So could I have the picture of Nanette Newman?
Mr J Manning, St Weonards

Dear Mr J,
(In the absence of Mr Bloxham I'd like to answer this letter Neil – Andy) (Go on then, but don't be too hard – Neil) You really are incredibly poorly, aren't you? Not only do you hate video games, you also buy MEGA – a mag dedicated solely to video games – and you obviously fancy some sad old actress who spends half her life getting lathered up with large numbers of cubs and scouts.

Anyway, as this month's MEGA MORON you win a bad photocopy of the Magnus Magnusson picture. Nyaah!

order firms that advertise in the mag – they should be able to get a copy for you. ***Neil***

BACK ISSUES

Dear Sir,
I enjoy very much your MEGA magazine. However, I seem to have missed issue one and wondered if I could obtain this from yourselves. If so, could you please tell me how much I should send you to cover postage and packing. Thank you.
James Williams, Llanelli

Dear James
Turn to page 85 of this very issue and you'll find the back issues page. It contains all you need to know about sending off for those copies you missed. ***Neil***

BLOXHAM EXPOSED

Oi MEGA,
I wrote to you a couple of weeks ago because I believed Harold S Bloxham was, in fact, a figment of your fertile imaginations. I came to this conclusion after noting that Mr Bloxham's address just happened to be the same as your own.

Did I write too late to stop you printing more letters from celebrities in your next issue? Or are you just too embarrassed about being rumbled? Or, alternatively, do you just think I am a berk?

If any of the above is true or if there is a completely different explanation, please reply to me or just give me a damn good slagging off in your next issue. After all, I am a subscriber and desperate for fame.

PS. *Sonic 2* is really rather good

PPS. Will there ever be a train-spotting sim from EASN on the Mega Drive?
Simon The Hedgehog, Bristol

Dear Simon,
Er, I see. So basically what you're saying is that Bloxham is really us trying some feeble gaff in order to fill the mag, is that right? Well, the truth of the matter is that Colonel Bloxham insisted on using our address so that the spoils of his ridiculous campaign to discredit the video game industry came straight to us. Fortunately, this works out quite well, because it does indeed help us to fill the mag, and it also enables us to expose Bloxham's abject failure to "rally the troops" as it were. Oh and by the way, if it's any consolation, we don't think you're a berk. ***Neil***

JOLLY HOCKEY SIMS

Dear MEGA,
Firstly may I say what a top-class magazine you put together. If this was the only magazine I bought, it would give me everything I needed. Anyway, I'm just writing to congratulate you on your reviews. I don't buy many games for my Mega Drive, but I have just bought *NHLPA Hockey* on the strength of your review, and you were absolutely spot on. The challenge is perfect and it has to be the fastest sport sim available and certainly the best game I have ever played. Just one more thing. I've been thinking about buying a football or basketball game – what would you recommend?
Gary Barnard, Northallerton

***NHLPA Hockey*. Just as fab as we said it was. See? You *can* trust us**

Dear Gary,
Thank God! Our reviewing system actually works. Not bad for something we cobbled together in ten minut... (Psst, Neil. Do you really think we ought to be telling them this? – Andy). Erm... Yes indeed Gary. We spent many months debating our reviewing system to get it as accurate as possible and we always collectively discuss the games we're reviewing so that we can come to a fair conclusion about them.

If you're thinking of buying a footy game, wait to see what Super Kick Off *is like (see the preview on page 24 of this issue of MEGA). If the conversion has been successful, it's guaranteed to be the best soccer game ever. If, however, you go for basketball instead,* Team USA Basketball *is the chappy to go for.* ***Neil***

FOUR-PLAYER FUN

Dear Neil,
Firstly, may I congratulate you on a truly excellent mag. It is the best Mega Drive mag on the streets. I have only just bought a Mega Drive so I would be very grateful if your MEGA brains could answer my very, very, very simple questions.

1) On the Nintendo Game Boy there is a four-player game with cables to join the consoles together. Will there be one for the Mega Drive?

2) My friends who are Nintendo freaks (say no more) say Andy Dyer is the Editor of TOTAL! I did not believe them until I saw the mag. Tell me if this is not true, so I can say "Arrr, you gutted…?"

3) What qualifications do I need to get a decent job like yours?

4) Have you ever thought of adding a poster to your magazine?

My Sega friends and me especially were deeply sad to hear that Amanda got married – I really did fancy her.
Martin Pedwell, Woking

Dear Martin,
1) Good news. Tengen are currently working on a Mega Drive version of the arcade classic Gauntlet. *To go with this multi-player extravaganza they're also producing a widget which plugs into the second joypad port and enables three pads to be plugged into the place of one. So effectively you have a four-player option. And who knows, it's possible that you'll be able to plug one of these into both ports and have a six-player game.* Gauntlet *is coming out in early '93, so expect the adaptor at around the same time.*

2) WRONG! Andy Dyer used to be a writer on TOTAL!, however because of the humorous cartoony nature of the mag, they use lots of little caricatures of the people on the team. When Andy left to work on MEGA, TOTAL! thought it would be a shame to lose the Thicky Dyer character, so they keep using it even though he no longer works there.

3) Tricky. Work hard at English, read lots of mags to see how other people do it, write a sample review or feature and write to lots of publishing companies. Basically, you need to be enthusiastic and keep pushing. And even if you speak to a few employers who don't actually want you at the time, make sure they point out where your weaknesses are (it's painful but necessary), and work on improving yourself in those areas.

4) Well, we had a tips calendar last month, but we have no plans for further posters as yet. Oh and by the way, the pictures you see of Amanda are actually cleverly "touched up" using a complex computer paint box. She actually looks something like this... ***Neil***

We can't be held responsible for any illness which is caused as a result of seeing Amanda in her true colours

BLAGGED!

"What's this? Where's Consequences?" I hear you cry. Well, having killed off practically the whole team in last month's consequences, we've decided to call it a day and run instead a column called... BLAGGED!

Last month we had a very similar letter to the one below, which was from someone trying to blag *Alien 3* free. However, that particular letter came from a completely different bloke from a completely different place. He failed miserably of course in his attempts to pull the wool over our eyes, but we thought this sort of thing would make a good substitute for the defunct consequences. So, here's this month's blagging letter.

Dear MEGA,
Please do exactly as I request. The story is, at about two past six I was playing Splatterhouse II. *Just as I was in the boat fighting the Octopus, Sigourney Weaver burst through my window spraying glass everywhere. She cried "Run kid", but my leg hurt because a lump of glass was stuck in it. As I got up, the poor (bald) woman's stomach exploded and a small red thing scampered off to the window. As my gaze followed it I saw two seven-foot tall aliens standing by the window. One of them opened its mouth and displayed its tongue thingy.*

They spoke (in English) to me and said that they wanted two people to lay eggs in, four cheese sandwiches and a copy of Alien 3. *They said that if they did not get what they wanted, they would take over the world. If they did get what they wanted though, they would never bother humans again. I gave them the four cheese sandwiches and my mum and dad in whom to lay the eggs (well, it is in the cause of helping to save the human race). All I need now is* Alien 3 *(the computer game) to save the world. PLEASE SEND ME THE GAME!!*
Stephen Patton, Hampton

All you have to do to win the cart of your choice is come up with a really elaborate or ridiculous reason as to why we should send you a free cart. The best entry each month wins the cart they're obviously so desperate to get hold of. Simple. Oh and by the way, Stephen Patton wins a copy of *Alien 3* (devious git).

SIMS GALORE

Dear MEGA MOUTH,
Let me join the queue and congratulate you on creating the magazine which I and no doubt thousands of others have been waiting very patiently for. Man, you're not just a breath of fresh air, you're the damn oxygen tank! Anyway, that's enough head-swelling stuff for now. If it's possible, could you please find time to answer my questions.

1) Which, in your personal opinion, is the best beat-'em-up to wait for? *Final Fight* (CD), *Streets Of Rage 2* or *Streetfighter 2?*

2) Will *Streetfighter 2* be in the £60 price range (like SNES), and is it true that cart prices are on the way down?

3) What sport games are EA currently working on? I'd love to see them make a boxing simulation with real-life pro boxers. Any chance?

4) Any chance of sequels to these games: *The Immortal, Desert Strike, Lemming, Shining In The Darkness?*

5) Finally, am I likely to see any versions of the following games in the future? A kick-boxing sim, a rally driving game, a half decent multi sports sim, *John Madden Football '97* (still without a league system), and more film tie-ins which are total bull and have nowt to do with the movie.

Thanx for your time and keep up the chillin' work,
Jonathon Thomas, Brynmawr

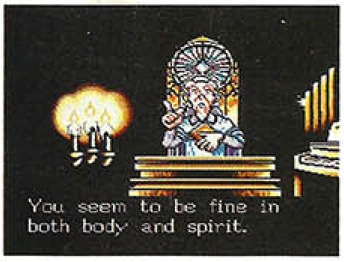
Turn Over

Dear Jonathon

1) Final Fight *is a great beat-'em-up as is* Streets Of Rage 2*, but if you're only going to buy one combat cart, wait and see what* Streetfighter 2 *is like. If it's anything like the SNES or arcade versions, it'll be the greatest thing since, since, well, it'll just be the greatest thing.*

2) We haven't a clue about the price of Streetfighter 2 *at the moment, but we'll let you know in a future issue of MEGA. As for cart prices in general, new carts will probably remain at the price they are now. Some budget titles have appeared (like* Super Hang On*), but this is only because they are old games. However, one encouraging piece of news is that the Codemasters' titles are going to be retailing at £35, that's £5 cheaper than other Sega carts. Whether any other games' producers will follow this lead remains to be seen. We can only hope.*

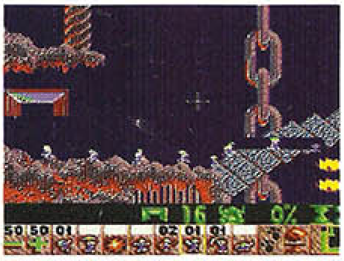
3) EA are currently working on a new baseball game, a soccer game, possibly a tennis game and definitely a motor racing game (probably based on Road Rash*). These will, of course, all be released under the EASN banner.*



Expect more compliments from old farts in *Shining Force*, the follow-up to *Shining in the Darkness*

4) Mmm, Lemmings 2 *has just come out on the home computers, so it's a fair bet to assume that it'll filter through to the consoles before long. There's a follow up to* Shining In The Darkness *called* Shining Force. *It's already out on import, but should be officially available in January. As for* The Immortal*, not a clue old boy, but apparently there will probably be a sequel to* Desert Strike. *We'll keep you informed.*

5) Kick Boxer *from Loriciel has been released in Japan, so it shouldn't be long before you can get it on import over here. We don't know of any rally driving sims in the pipeline, but* Race Drivin' *is about as close as you'll get. Look out for it on import soon. Multi sports sims are a bit thin on the ground too, but if you haven't already got it,* Olympic Gold *is a fine example of the genre.* John Madden '97? *Mmmm... I don't know, but I think we may have seen the last of old Johnny boy. He got about as good as he could really. Nope, there won't be any more* John Madde... *Oh it's no good, I can't keep it up. Let's face it, EA aren't just going to shelve a gigantic money-spinner like that, are they? We'll probably end up with* Madden 2000 *at this rate.* ***Neil***



Will *Lemmings 2* ever appear on the Mega Drive? We reckon so

MAIL ORDER BARGAINS

Dear MEGA MOUTH,

I would like to thank you for producing the best Sega magazine yet, all the better for it to be dedicated solely to the Mega Drive.

The reason for writing to you is to let Mega Drive owners know of a situation I found myself in a little while ago. While looking through the advertisement section of another magazine, I came across a local shop selling cheap games for mail order. Rather than order it through mail order I decided to visit the shop to purchase the game I wanted. I was quoted a price of £5 dearer than advertised and brought this to the shop owner's attention. The reason for this was that the mail order business was a cut-throat one with prices being slashed due to many businesses being run from home and so having very low overheads. I was, therefore, forced to pay the extra £5 for the cartridge.

My point is this. I think everyone knows the benefits of playtesting a game before buying it, especially when you are being forced to cough up £40 a throw. However, with the excellent prices being offered by mail order companies, I can forsee a situation by which computer shops offer the facility for people to test before buying. Despite this, customers may still prefer to purchase mail order, because of the budget prices. While a price war is beneficial to all Mega Drive owners, there is a need for computer shops to remain open, because of the specialist advice and services that they can offer. I have not decided where to buy my next game from yet, but am sure that price will be a major decider in these hard times.

PS. Any chance of a full review of *Euro Club Soccer?*

David Wilkinson, Woodford Bridge

Dear David,

It's a strange situation, but the fact is that Sega don't like imported games (neither for that matter do Nintendo). However, the ridiculous thing is that mail order companies can import games and sell them here much cheaper than officially released titles.

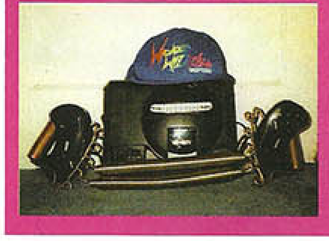
Worse still, they can actually import games that are already on sale officially and still do 'em cheaper. If you want to save money, then the obvious choice is to use mail order companies. You're correct in saying that using this method prevents you from trying the game out first, but there is such a huge wealth of software coming out each month that there's bound to be a goodie in there somewhere, and that's what us mags are here for. Basically, use mail order to buy games that you know you'll like. If you're completely unsure, then opt for the try-before-you-buy option at a shop.

As for Euro Club Soccer*, take a peek at the past masters review on page 77.* ***Neil***

EXCERPTS FROM THE DIARY OF A STUNT MEGA DRIVE

Meet Floyd. According to his owner he's a multi-talented Mega Drive. And judging by the array of photos we were sent, it's absolutely true. The one we've chosen to show you though is of Floyd, resplendent in baseball cap and using a chest expander. Not much of a stunt really, but he looks well hard so we'll give the owner a prize anyway. *Carl Simpson* of Sutton Coldfield is the bloke in question (and a very strange bloke he is too).

If anybody else wants to win a cart, send your wacky Mega Drive-related piccies to Stunt Mega Drive, MEGA, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW.



Floyd is the coolest Mega Drive we've ever seen. See how easily he grapples with the chest expanders

ER... UM!

Dear MEGA MOUTH,

First I would just like to say what a great magazine MEGA is. It's crammed with ravishing reviews, tremendous tips and gagging gags! But why have *The Gadget Twins, Cap America* and *Gynoug* got the same screenshots in the MEGA Top 100?

I have one request. Could you please, please, please send me a copy of *Predator 2* or *Shadow Dancer* 'cos my Mum said, and I quote, "You've got enough violence on your videos let alone your compu... Er, console". And despite my pleas she never gives in. Could you perhaps say a few words to her about this situation? Cheers!

PS. I'm a big fan of Michelle Pfeiffer, so say something nasty to Sega for making her look like a hooker from Total Recall in *Batman Returns* will you?

PPS. Also, do the same to whoever gave *Sonic 2* 89% in Sega Power.

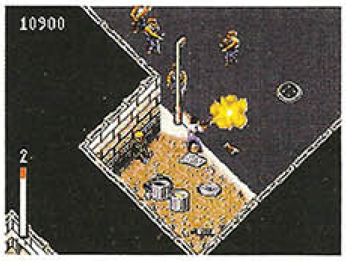
Please print this letter, as my friend said he would eat his dog if you do. And don't make me a MEGA Moron.

Dave "I won the* Alien 3 *compo in Sega Power" Rees, Carshalton

Dear Dave,

About those screenshots... They are indeed all the bloody same. The reason is, um, er, how shall I put it? Non existent. Basically (and we're not too proud to admit it), we messed up big style. Sorry!

As for your other request, bog off! We can't just dish out carts willy nilly you know. But here's a message for your mother "BUY YOUR SON A COPY OF PREDATOR 2 *OR* SHADOW DANCER *OR PAUL MELLERICK GETS IT". What do you mean, "so what"? Sorry kid, we tried.* ***Neil***



Dave Rees would like a copy of *Predator 2*. Is he mentally unsound?

THE MIGHTY BRAIN BITES BACK

Dear Neil,

"Sadly The Mighty Brain is a law unto himself and cannot be borrowed. He comes from a dimensio... NO! It's no good, I can perpetuate this lie no longer. It's all very well to deceive poor Commodore 64 owners, but it's time you were told... The Mighty Brain doesn't exist." (MEGA MOUTH, issue three)

Huurmph! This is a shocking statement, as untrue as it is libellous. I demand the right to defend myself.

Since my arrival in your particular space/time vector I have observed your species closely. You can be divided into two distinct types: Neophiles and Neophobes. Neophiles are people who openly embrace, or indeed actively seek, change. Neophobes, on the other hand, are terrified of change and cannot conceive of any "reality structure" other than that dictated by society. They also refuse to listen to the words of Neophiles.

Typically, computer owners tend to be Neophiles and console owners Neophobes. Computers are a tool, the uses of which are unspecified, and the machine relies on the imagination of its user. Neophobes on the other hand, prefer consoles, which offer a deliberately restricted choice of functions.

As Neophobes, many console owners do not believe in me. This is due to their deep rooted fear of change and hatred of anything which dares to question your socially conditioned reality framework.

To conclude, I do exist. Your closed minds simply deny this fact and do not disprove it. If anything, I am too real for your Neophobe minds to tolerate.

TMB, Commodore Format, Bath

Dear Mighty,

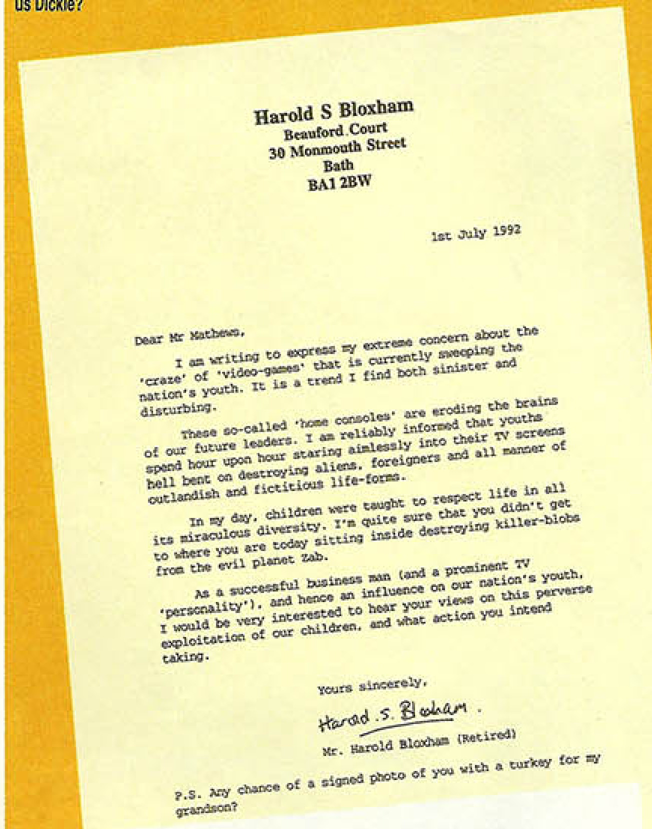
Ha, ha, haaa, come off it! You expect us to believe that crap? Time for the truth. You are none other than... Trenton Webb, editor of Commodore Format. Defend yourself now, deluded eight-bit loser. ***Neil***

THE LAST WORD

If you have something to say to us at MEGA or something you want to say to the public through our magazine, write to: MEGA MOUTH, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW,

THE CURIOUS LETTERS OF HAROLD S BLOXHAM

Bernard Matthews has consigned himself to the ranks of the terminally stupid by agreeing with Colonel Bloxham. We reckon they're both in the masons or sumfink. As for Richard Briers, he's a bit of a dark horse, isn't he? He reckons video games are better than drugs. The question is, how does this star of family entertainment and twee situation comedy actually know? Do you have something you'd like to tell us Dickie?



Harold S Bloxham
Beauford Court
30 Monmouth Street
Bath
BA1 2BW

1st July 1992

Dear Mr Mathews,

I am writing to express my extreme concern about the 'craze' of 'video-games' that is currently sweeping the nation's youth. It is a trend I find both sinister and disturbing.

These so-called 'home consoles' are eroding the brains of our future leaders. I am reliably informed that youths spend hour upon hour staring aimlessly into their TV screens hell bent on destroying aliens, foreigners and all manner of outlandish and fictitious life-forms.

In my day, children were taught to respect life in all its miraculous diversity. I'm quite sure that you didn't get to where you are today sitting inside destroying killer-blobs from the evil planet Zab.

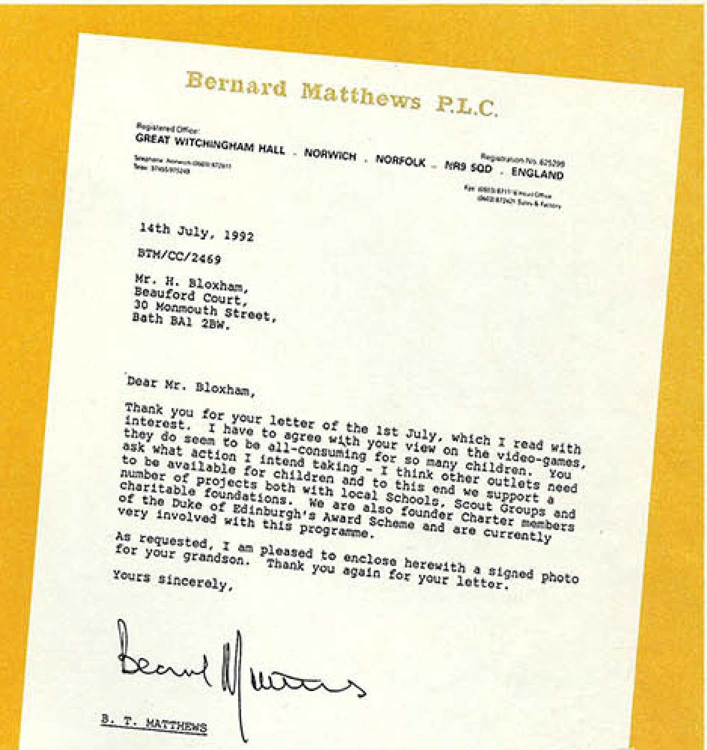
As a successful business man (and a prominent TV 'personality'), and hence an influence on our nation's youth, I would be very interested to hear your views on this perverse exploitation of our children, and what action you intend taking.

Yours sincerely,

Harold .S. Bloxham .

Mr. Harold Bloxham (Retired)

P.S. Any chance of a signed photo of you with a turkey for my grandson?



Bernard Matthews P.L.C.

Registered Office:
GREAT WITCHINGHAM HALL . NORWICH . NORFOLK . NR9 5QD . ENGLAND

14th July, 1992

BTM/CC/2469

Mr. H. Bloxham,
Beauford Court,
30 Monmouth Street,
Bath BA1 2BW.

Dear Mr. Bloxham,

Thank you for your letter of the 1st July, which I read with interest. I have to agree with your view on the video-games, they do seem to be all-consuming for so many children. You ask what action I intend taking - I think other outlets need to be available for children and to this end we support a number of projects both with local Schools, Scout Groups and charitable foundations. We are also founder Charter members of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme and are currently very involved with this programme.

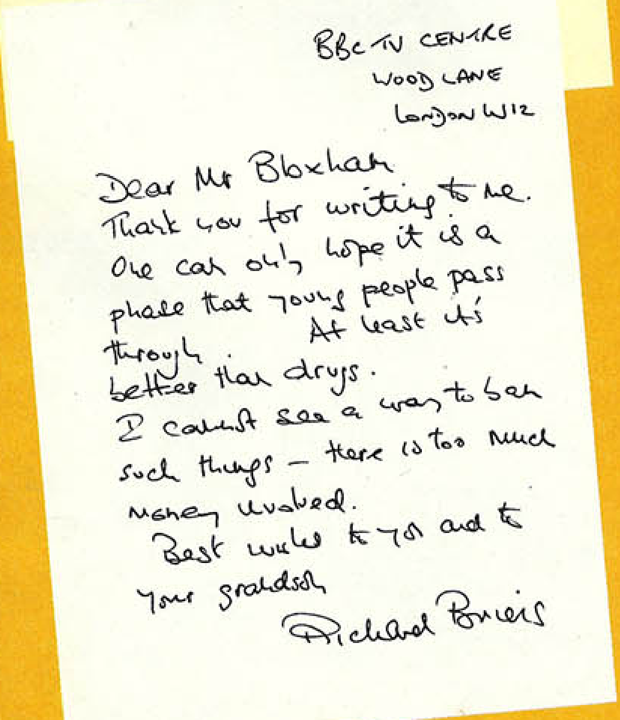
As requested, I am pleased to enclose herewith a signed photo for your grandson. Thank you again for your letter.

Yours sincerely,

Bernard Matthews

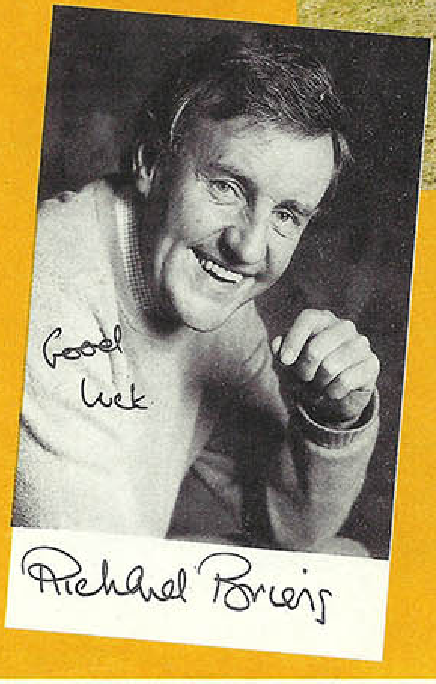
B. T. MATTHEWS

B. T. Matthews, Chairman D. J. Joll, Managing C. J. H. Simps



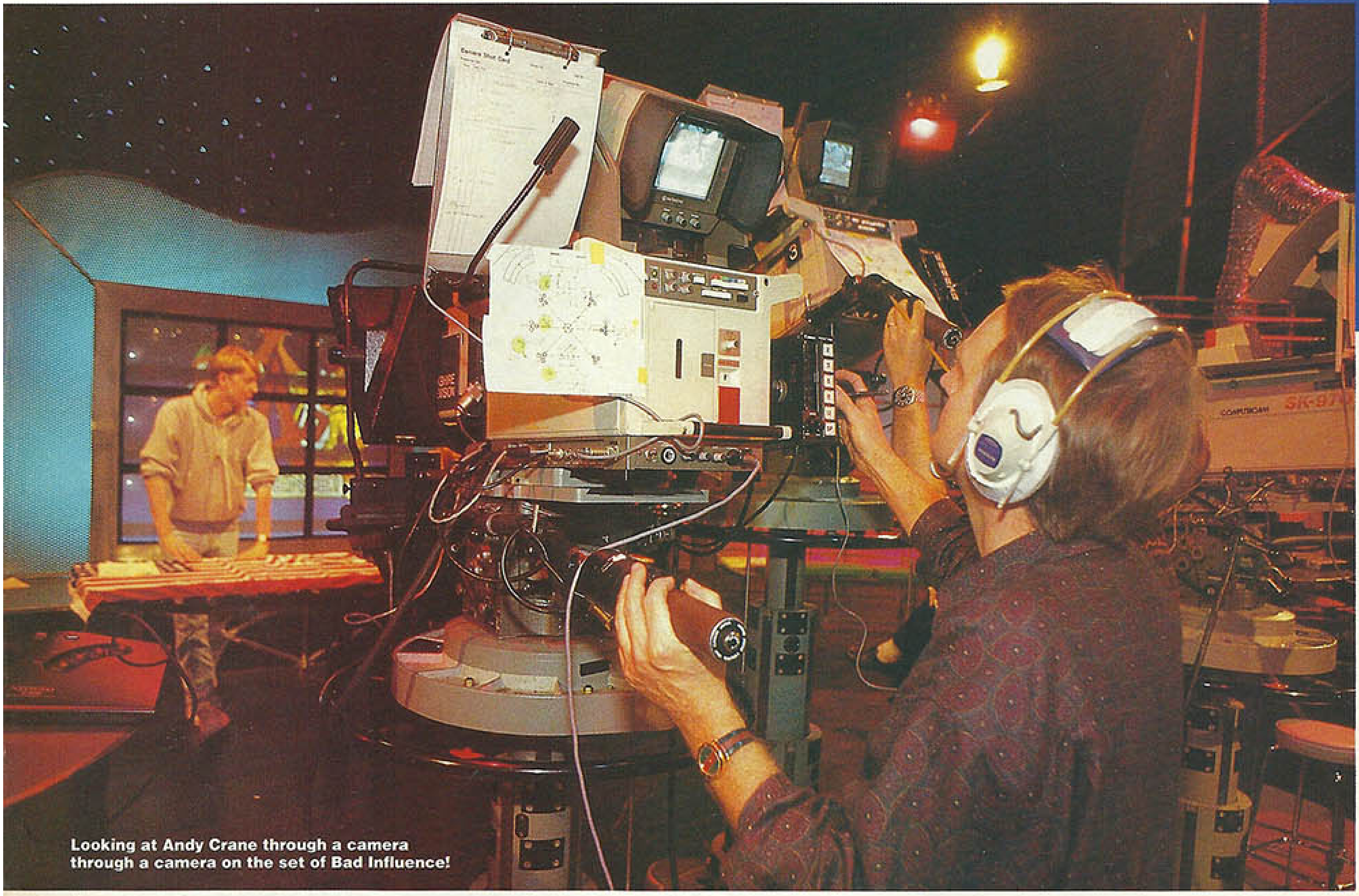
BBC TV CENTRE
WOOD LANE
LONDON W12

Dear Mr Bloxham
Thank you for writing to me.
One can only hope it is a
phase that young people pass
through. At least it's
better than drugs.
I cannot see a way to ban
such things - there is too much
money involved.
Best wishes to you and to
your grandson
Richard Briers



Good luck

Richard Briers



Looking at Andy Crane through a camera through a camera on the set of Bad Influence!

Creating a BAD

This is a man with a camera. (Sorry folks, but I don't quite know what else to say about it – Neil)

"Up a bit, down a bit, ooh, just to the left a... oh. YES, *yes!*". Getting the perfect picture in the control room takes keen eyes and a steady hand

Violet takes a break in rehearsals to sit on the stage and wave her legs about. Each to their own...

INFLUENCE!

Bad Influence! is recorded on the day before it is broadcast. Wow! Neil West visits the studios on a Wednesday to find out exactly how it's all put together

It's Thursday on ITV. It's 4.35 pm. Rolf's Cartoon Club is bashing, zapping and splatting its way to a grand finale (and people say that video games are violent), but at Yorkshire TV the final seconds of Bad Influence! are still being edited. With just ten minutes before broadcast time, this is cutting it (my little TV editing gag there) as close as you're ever likely to get away with in the world of networked television.

But then that's the price you pay for keeping the show as up-to-the-minute and downright hot (man) as possible. The reports from America and Japan were all done before the series started (although all after October) and the occasional "on the road" piece (such as the spectacular coverage of the finals of the national computer games championships at the Future Entertainment Show in which not a single shot of Neil appeared) are done usually a week before broadcast. The actual presenting footage (where Violet Berlin and Andy Crane come into things) is recorded in the studio the day before transmission.

So, on one fine Wednesday in December myself and photographer Jude Edginton decided to get up at 5 am, stagger on to a train to Leeds, eat a British Rail lasagne for breakfast and spend the next eight hours holding polite conversation while our stomachs did their dastardly best to feel and sound like a herd of buffalo.

What follows is what we observed about creating a Bad Influence!

9.30 AM: NAM ROOD'S TIPS BIT

Andy Wear is the actor (National Theatre darlings) behind Bad Influence!'s de rigeur "wacky" tips character (Gamesmaster has an eccentric VR boffin, MEGA's got Paul Mellerick – see the pattern?). Nam Rood spells "Door man" backwards (and rumours that we're changing Paul's name to Tig Taf are not true). His tips are compiled by the show's producers and researchers, then Andy simply reads the script.

10.15 AM: VIEWERS' REVIEWS

Bad Influence! seeks the opinion of genuine on-the-street gamesplayers to provide its reviews. Eight days before broadcast, pre-selected kids are given the games to take home to play. A YTV rep asks the kids what they think of them, a script is boshed up, and then the filming takes place. Fame, fortune, and the wrath of Sega (if they don't like the games) awaits.

12.15 PM: PRESENTERS ARRIVE

Andy and Violet turn up to record their voice-overs to the game reviews plus all the introductory bits and links. Their words have already been written by the show's researchers, so it's all pretty easy really.

12.30 PM: PLAY THE GAMES

The actual game footage is recorded onto VT (hey!) using special equipment for the Game Gear, Gameboy and Lynx games. With up to 18 games covered in each show, this procedure take a some time, especially if the producer demands that some of the later levels are shown, which (producers being notorious gits) they are highly likely to do.

1 PM: LUNCH

Bangers, salad, biscuits, coffee and NO lasagne (hurrah!).

2 PM: REHEARSALS

Hopefully, by this point the show's producers have a pretty solid idea of what's going into the show, so the camera crews and the two presenters walk through the show working out camera angles and exactly who's going to say what and when. This is the only rehearsal Andy and Violet get, so it's time to concentrate. Poor luvs.

4.15 PM: AUDIENCE ARRIVES!

Chatter, natter, ooh look it's Andy Crane!, fidget, cough and cheer like lunatics.

4.30 PM: RECORDING STARTS

Lights, camera, action, etc.

6.00 PM: DAY OVER

Well, that's the plan anyway. If the show's recording over-runs, then it costs serious money (the same studio is also used for the recording of Countdown and Emmerdale).

Editing starts the following morning, and then it's straight into planning, organising and filming the next week's instalment. And so it goes on... There are still no definite plans for a second series of Bad Influence!, but more of the same does seem rather likely – so stay tuned. Ⓜ

ROAD WORK

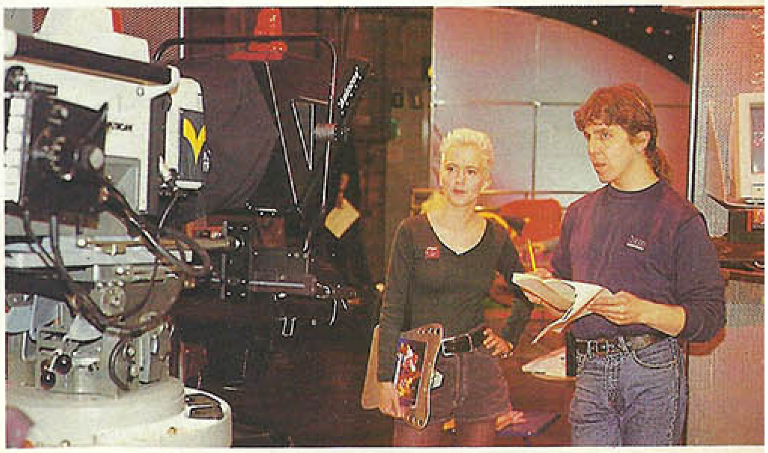
Andy! Wake up you lazy git! (left) Quick, let's sabo' the auto-cue...

BE A TV STAR!

Sort of. If you fancy being in the audience of Bad Influence!, then this is your chance (bear in mind that you'll have to go to Leeds to do it). Anyway, simply send in a 50-word review of any Mega Drive game to: Bad Influence! Compo, MEGA, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW.

No, Andy Crane isn't being thumped, he's just checking out the auto-cue. It's used when the presenters have to remember lots of technical data

"It looks just like an ordinary camera to me Ma'am." "But I'm telling you, it was looking at me funny!" "Well, I'll give it a cold shower, OK?" "Thanks."



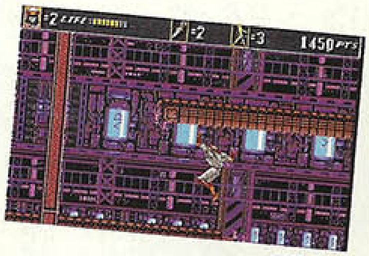
SHUT DOWN

As Valentine's Day approaches, Neil, Andy and Paul gird their loins for the inevitable influx of gorgeous women clamouring to drag them off for a night of passion

But before we prepare for the sexual marathon ahead, we'll take a few moments out to tell you what we have in store for the next issue.

SHINOBI 3

From what we've seen so far, this game looks like *Revenge Of Shinobi* on steroids. The graphics have been pumped right up and the action's more frantic than ever. The gameplay might not be vastly different, but then if that's what people liked in the first place, why disappoint them by changing it all? No, this is looking very good so look out for the review next ish.



By the time we start work on the next issue, *Shinobi 3* should be nearing completion. And if all goes well, we'll be able to bring you the full review. Eyes peeled chaps!

THE As ON THE BACK PAGE

Have you answered all the questions on page 11 of the news section? No? Well, go and do it now then. And once you've done that, come back here to add up your score. Remember, there are no prizes for this, just a sense of satisfaction or despair at the end of it.

1. September 1990
2. Three
3. British Bulldog
4. Crying
5. 00%
6. *Wheel of Fortune* – it got 22% in issue three
7. 210 rings
8. Full Motion Video
9. Yes, but it doesn't last very long
10. Capcom
11. *John Madden '93* (but Andy reckons it should be *Sonic 2*, because the rest are all good games)
12. Robert Llewellyn
    Dominik Diamond
    Jimmy
    Andy Crane
    Pat Sharp
13. *Land Stalker*
14. Seven, you forgot the Start button, didn't you?
15. Kevin Costner
16. *Another World*
17. *Rolo to the Rescue*
18. *PGA Tour 2*
19. *Nobunaga and his Ninja Force*
20. *Hellfire*

1 – 8 points: We laugh heartily in your face

9 – 14 points: We tweak your nipples

15 – 17 points: We fondle your buttocks for your extensive knowledge of Sega products

18 – 20 points: We tickle your midriff with downy feathers while feeding you the choicest grapes and bathing you in ass's milk. You are, indeed, a Sega god

MEGA TV STARDOM COMPETITION

The *Road Rash* leather jacket and *Greendog* and *Sonic 2* T-shirts are still up for grabs. And because no-one's won the prize yet, we're going to add some more stuff to it. This month's additions are a copy of *PGA Tour Golf* and (better still) a year's subscription to MEGA. Fab, wowzer, triff, and, dare we say, spiff.

This is what you have to do. Get yourself on TV holding a copy of MEGA. When the programme you appeared on is shown on telly, video it, and send the tape to us. Make sure you tape enough of the programme to convince us that it wasn't done on the family camcorder, and you'll be fine. Please be sensible. If you do anything illegal, we'll ignore you totally (or better still give you a really crap lawyer).

Send your vids to "Ha! Done it! Give me the booty!" compo, MEGA, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon, BA1 2BW. There's no closing date for this compo. And the longer the compo stays open, the bigger the prize gets. No one from Future Publishing can enter this compo, or their relatives, husbands, wives, concubines, mistresses, dogs, cats, tropical fish or rabbits. But for some curious reason there's a loophole in the law, which permits any gerbils owned by Future Publishing employees to enter.

TIPS

A complete solution to *Rolo To The Rescue* and hints and tips for hundreds of other games. All in...

ISSUE 6

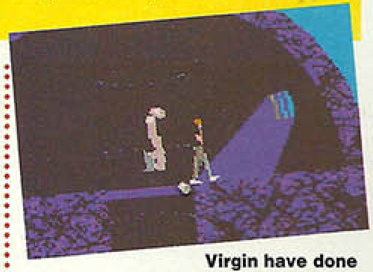
out on Thursday 18 February

SUPER KICK OFF

Prepare to scream such classic phrases as "Where's the ****ing defence?", "Player one always has an advantage, anyway" and "What's the matter with this sodding joypad?" at your best friend.

Yes, the classic footy simulation *Kick Off* is nearly ready for our beloved Mega Drives. Normally we'd have a fairly good idea of what a games going to be like, but this one could swing either way. Fingers crossed everyone, and if US Gold deliver the goods, we'll soon be playing the greatest soccer game of all time.

***Super Kick Off* on the Mega Drive will be crammed full of options. But will it play well? Find out next month**



Virgin have done a stonking job on Delphine's graphical adventure *Another World*. To see just how good it is, read the review in next month's MEGA

ANOTHER WORLD

Virgin takes Delphine's brilliant PC game (*Out Of This World*), makes no changes to it whatsoever (apart from the name), and puts it on the Mega Drive. And a bally good job too. Graphically, this adventure is well-spooky and rattles along like a souped-up variant on the *Prince Of Persia* theme. To get an idea of just how good it turns out, read our full review next month.

AND MORE...

As is usually the case, we now wibble on about all the other stuff that we'll be bringing you next month. Only, this time we'll admit we're not 100% certain. What is likely though is the first part of our guide to how Mega Drive games are actually created. We'll also be speaking to Violet Berlin (host of Bad Influence! on the telly) and asking her if video games are sexist.

Snip!

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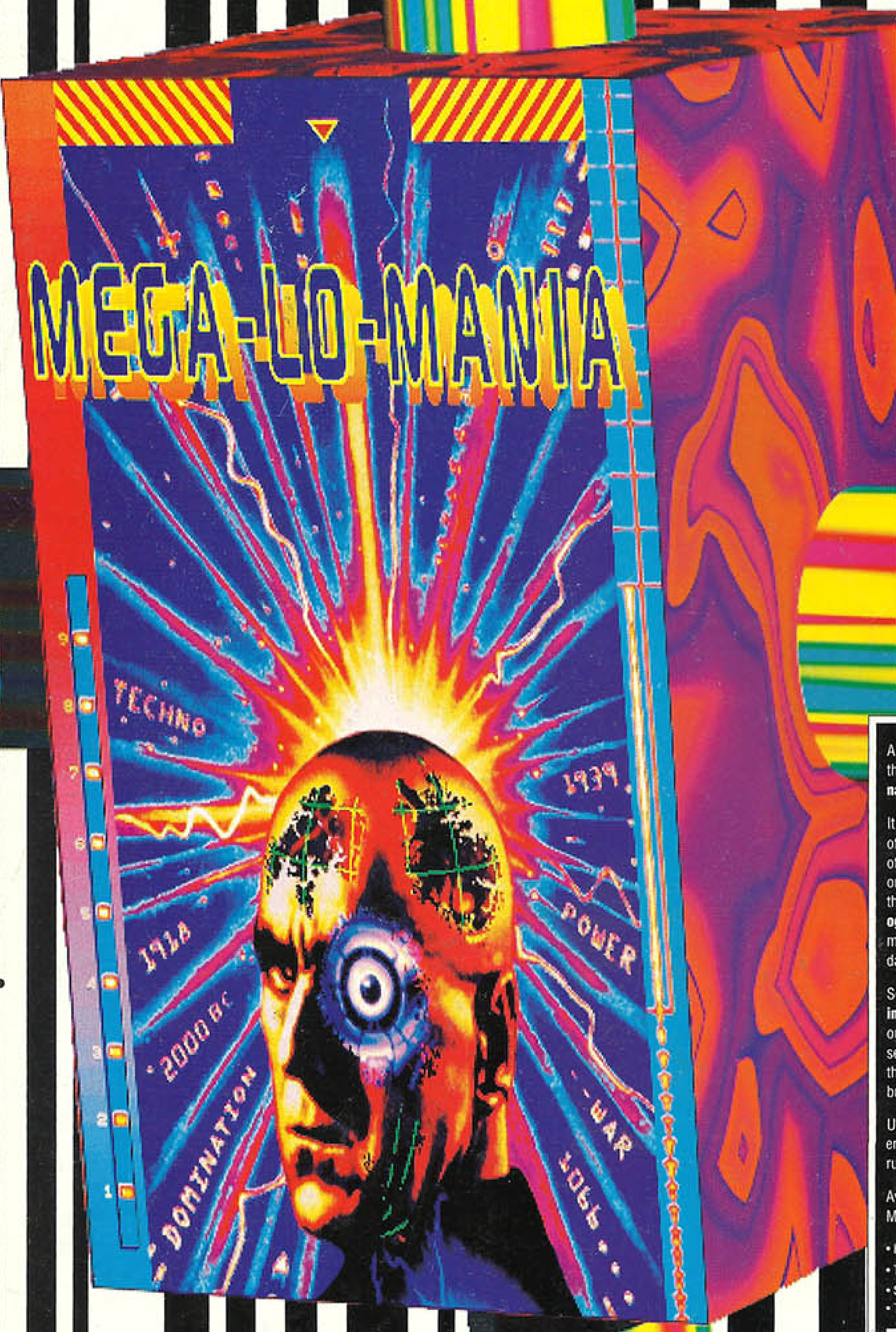

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THAN WHAT IS FEASIBLE ON A WEBSITE.
THIS WAY, ANYONE WHO IS BUT A MOUSE-CLICK AWAY WILL BE ABLE
TO ENJOY THESE CLASSIC MAGAZINES ONCE MORE.

WE DO HOWEVER ONLY SEEK OUT MAGAZINES WHICH ARE PUBLISHED PRIOR
TO THE YEAR 2000, UNLESS PERMISSION HAS BEEN GRANTED BY THE PUBLISHER
IN QUESTION TO DO OTHERWISE.
THE ONLY EXCEPTIONS TO THIS RULE ARE DREAMCAST EXCLUSIVE MAGAZINES,
DUE TO THE NATURE AND CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING THE SYSTEM,
AS WELL AS NINTENDO 64 EXCLUSIVE MAGAZINES.
REPRINTS AND RE-ISSUED CLASSIC MAGAZINES IN ANY SHAPE OR FORM
(DIGITAL VERSIONS INCLUDED) WILL BE TREATED LIKE NEW MAGAZINES,
WHICH MEANS WE WON'T BE SCANNING OR DISTRIBUTING THEM.

THE REASON FOR RESTRICTING OURSELVES TO MAGAZINES PUBLISHED
BEFORE A CERTAIN DATE, IS TO GIVE PUBLISHERS ENOUGH BREATHING ROOM
TO SELL REPRINTS OR DIGITAL VERSIONS OF THEIR OLD MAGAZINES
IF THEY WISH TO DO SO.
THESE ARE HARD ENOUGH TIMES AS IT IS FOR PRINT AND THE LAST THING
WE WOULD WANT IS TO DO IS HAVE ANY KIND OF NEGATIVE EFFECT ON THEM.
WE SEEK OUT TO WORK WITH PUBLISHERS AND ARE ALWAYS LOOKING TO
SEEK APPROVAL TO DIGITIZE, RESTORE AND RE-DISTRIBUTE THEIR WORKS
IN WHATEVER WAY THEY SEE FIT. (PUBLICLY OR WITH SILENT APPROVAL)

WE HAVE NO INTENT NOR DESIRE TO PROFIT FROM THESE DIGITAL MAGAZINES
IN ANY WAY, SHAPE OR FORM, NOR DO WE HAVE ANY DESIRE TO FINANCIALLY
HARM ANY PUBLISHER, EDITOR, WRITER OR PERSON INVOLVED IN CREATING
THESE, OR ANY OTHER MAGAZINES FOR THAT MATTER.
WE ARE NOT HERE TO DO HARM, BUT TO HELP PROTECT THEIR LEGACY.
THAT IS WHY THE PRE-2000 DATE IS IN PLACE:
TO PROTECT THEIR BUSINESS AND LIVELY-HOOD, AND TO MAKE SURE THAT WE
WILL BE ABLE TO KEEP ENJOYING NEW MAGAZINES FOR MANY YEARS TO COME,
WHILE AT THE SAME TIME ENJOY THEIR BACK CATALOGUE.

WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK EVERYONE WHO MAKES THIS PROJECT POSSIBLE.
FROM THE ORIGINAL WRITERS, EDITORS AND PUBLISHERS, TO THE CURRENT
COPYRIGHT OWNERS AND EVERYONE INVOLVED IN ACQUIRING, DIGITIZING,
RESTORING, PRESERVING AND DISTRIBUTING THESE MAGAZINES.

ONE LAST THING:
IF YOU COME ACROSS ANYONE TRYING TO SELL ANY OF THESE DIGITAL
MAGAZINES, OR PROFIT FROM THEM IN ANY WAY, SHAPE OR FORM,
PLEASE DO NOT SUPPORT THEM!

THANK YOU!

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BE SURE TO CHECK THE MAGAZINE CATALOGUE ON OUR SITE.

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